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Ecological Citizenship and Sustainable Development

A qualitative study of millennial African students in Norway and their views on climate change responsibility and sustainable development.

Master's thesis in Globalization and Sustainable Development

Supervisor: Jørund Aasetre

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Abstract

The IPCC is clear in its message: the world must work to curtail emissions to avoid the global temperature exceeding 1.5°C. It cannot excessively rely on technology to remove CO₂ out of the air. While there is no panacea to solve global environmental problems, this thesis echoes a ‘call to citizenship’ as a tool in the joint struggle. It draws from ecological citizenship, a political theory which stresses ecological footprints as a source for environmental obligations. Ecological citizenship is global in its scope, and heralds asymmetrical responsibilities and non-reciprocal relationships. The end goal is not only sustainability, but justice. This thesis explores millennial African students in Norway and their views on sustainable development. Through qualitative interviews, five people (from Ghana, Uganda, and Eritrea) voice their opinions on responsibility in climate change affairs. The study analyses where they assign responsibility, and whether their sustainable development views are indicative of ecological citizenship. Ultimately, the thesis finds that millennial African students in Norway take climate change seriously and address the problem with a broad, global view. Their emphasis on global obligations, material differences, asymmetrical responsibilities, and capacities resonates well with ecological citizenship. Furthermore, the study can report somewhat novel findings in perceived self-efficacy among its respondents, which is found to be higher compared to relevant research. The informants assign responsibility to both the public and the private sphere. Although they see responsibility primarily in rich and resourceful countries, often in Europe, but also the US, China, and Norway, the inclusion of the latter entails some responsibility for themselves as well. The study can present corresponding findings of an internalization of environmental responsibility as reported in related studies. Some of these findings give credence to arguments of an individualization (or ‘privatization’) of environmental responsibilities. These empirical findings raise some questions towards ecological citizenship and give rise to the conceptual mechanisms of efficacy and ecological intent, which might strengthen ecological citizenship theory.

Keywords: Ecological citizenship, sustainable development, responsibility, globalization, neoliberalism.

Foreword

*Can you hate the world enough to change it,
and yet love it enough to think it worth changing?*
G.K. Chesterton

The memories of writing this dissertation will forever be tied to the unprecedented spring of the Covid-19 outbreak. It would have been an oppressively solipsistic existence if it were not for the feedback from my supervisor Jørund Aasetre, whose insights have been most valuable – thank you! The thesis has hinged on the participation of all my informants. Once again, I greatly appreciate your insights. I would also like to say thank you to my family and my girlfriend for their continued support. To my colleagues and fellow students, *gamsahamnida!*

A fight against climate change should also be a fight against cliché. The ‘age of discontent’, vapid as it is, loosely based on Richard III, has been employed to just about any fight or struggle in the past few years. In the summer of 2019, it described the strikes for climate action.

There has never been an age of content that I know of, and I do not hope the future will be one either. From quixotic school strikers to quiet scientists, climate change requires broad responses. It is my hope that a call to citizenship can play a role in this joint effort.



Trondheim, 29 May 2020

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List of abbreviations

IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NTNU	Norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige universitet
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SDI	Stepwise-deductive inductive model
UN	United Nations
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
US	United States
WCED	Chair of the World Commission on Environment and Development
RQ	Research Question

1. Introduction

It tells you the disparity, and the injustice in our global systems and global arrangements.

Two people who have done two different crimes can't serve the same sentence.

It doesn't make sense. It just makes you feel that this is another form of injustice. – John.

This citation is from 'John'¹, a Ghanaian student in Trondheim who discusses the different responsibilities of Ghana and Norway in addressing climate change. John and the millennial African students in this thesis are concerned about climate change, especially for its potential impacts in the global South. They see climate change in a global perspective, both its causes and the responsibilities to combat it. John's metaphor embodies views associated with ecological citizenship, a political theory which highlights asymmetry and non-reciprocal relationships in climate change.

The perils of pollution and challenges of climate change receive global attention, and it is the subject of several recent dissertations. This particular thesis contributes to the debate about ecological citizenship (e.g. Dobson, 2003, Hayward, 2006, Jagers, 2009, Melo-Escrihuela, 2008, Schild, 2016, Selboe and Sæther, 2018). It utilizes political philosophy and theory as well as empirical data from in-depth interviews to address ways to sustainable development. From technocratic IPCC reports (e.g. IPCC, 2014), via doomsday-like stories in media outlets (e.g. Holden and Borger, 2020), to puzzled internal conflicts of individuals (e.g. Norgaard, 2006), climate change is, as Michael Beard learns in *Solar*, "an epic story ... with a million authors" (McEwan, 2010, p. 147)². For this epic story to win its audience's attention, it needs a powerful narrative. The thesis argues that ecological citizenship can be part of this narrative, and be a tool which "captures one's imagination and adds credibility to the sustainability imperative" (Schild, 2016, p. 19).

In this endeavour, the study promotes the voices of some of climate change's authors, who are seldom heard compared to their western counterparts. Through their roles as informants, they contribute to the literature on ecological citizenship, which lacks empirical data from non-western sources. During the spring of 2020, five millennial African³ students in Trondheim participated in semi-structural interviews. The study aims at understanding where they assign responsibility to combat climate change, and whether their sustainability views are indicative

¹ The informants' real names are replaced with pseudonyms.

² Novel about climate change.

³ Three from Ghana, one from Uganda, one from Eritrea.

of ecological citizenship. The informants assign responsibility to combat climate change broadly and based on a global view. Their conceptualizations of problems and solutions are informed by ecological footprints, capacities, and virtue. To them, responsibility belongs to the biggest polluters, which relates to ecological footprints, but also to the most capable states, such as European states (for example Norway), but also China, India, and the US in particular. Responsibility is assigned to both the private and the public sphere. The inclusion of the former entails individual responsibility, although these are asymmetrical, and non-reciprocal. Ultimately, the thesis finds supporting evidence to assert that the informants hold sustainable development views indicative of ecological citizenship. The limited number of informants does not allow for a broader generalization to millennial African students in Norway.

Furthermore, the thesis finds some attitudes of individual responsibility which can be tied to scholarly critique of privatization of environmental responsibility, and subsequently utilizes the empirical data in an attempt to strengthen the theory. Ecological citizenship may be susceptible to becoming subservient to the process of privatization of environmental responsibility. It is argued that the empirical data can improve ecological citizenship by installing conceptual mechanisms of efficacy and ecological intent, which aim to refocus the private sphere as an intentional, effective arena of citizenship.

1.1. Background – Inspiration for the research

1.1.1. Importance of urgent climate change action

A recent IPCC report has yet again underscored the importance of urgent climate action (IPCC, 2018a), an ongoing phenomenon where the causal link between human activity and climate change is well established. The IPCC estimates that human activities have “caused approximately 1.0°C of global warming above pre-industrial levels, with a likely range of 0.8°C to 1.2°C.” (Ibid., p. 4). Furthermore, the IPCC (2018b) warns of relying too much on technological fixes, stating in its summary for policymakers that:

Allowing the global temperature to temporarily exceed or ‘overshoot’ 1.5°C would mean a greater reliance on techniques that remove CO₂ from the air to return global temperature to below 1.5°C by 2100. The effectiveness of such techniques are unproven at large scale and some may carry significant risks for sustainable development.

Human activity is directly contributing to the increase in temperatures, thus exerting extensive

pressure on the biosphere capacity to absorb and sustain our activities (Dobson, 2000, p. 23). Climate change will have extensive consequences everywhere, but will “disproportionately harm the poorest and the most vulnerable” (UNDESA, 2017, p. 44). Countries in sub-Saharan Africa are particularly at risk, despite being less responsible for causing climate change. These countries have faced “more frequent and more intense climate extremes over the past decades” (Shepard, 2019). Climate change exacerbates current problems and an increase in temperature over 1.5° would have profound ramifications (Ibid.). This backdrop confronts us with “the fierce urgency of now” (King, 1967).

1.1.2. The tendency to shift responsibility onto the individual

While recognizing the for action, there is less consensus on who this responsibility should fall to. Inspired by Selboe and Sæther’s (2018) analysis⁴ of Norwegian youth perspectives, this thesis sets out to contribute to the worthwhile debate on ecological citizenship. Chiefly promoted by Dobson (e.g., 2003), ecological citizenship argues that responsibility resides with those with asymmetrically large ecological footprints. These individuals are obligated to reduce their footprints based on global commitments, as climate change does not respect national borders.

People’s perceptions on climate change are significant. It affects the development of policies, and their legitimacy (Austgulen and Stø, 2013, p. 124)⁵. Capstick et al. (2015) finds that a normalization and an internalization of climate change responsibilities are increasingly common, which entails that people largely undertake environmental actions in the private sphere without necessarily questioning them. At the same time, scholars have warned that there is an individualization/privatization of environmental responsibility (Maniates, 2001, Schindel Dimick, 2015). Citizenship theories with emphasis on environmental affairs are criticized for not responding sufficiently to these concerns (Schindel Dimick, 2015). If informants overwhelmingly self-ascribe responsibility, there is a danger of alleviating responsibility from states and actors with potential for substantial action.

⁴The authors, through focus group data, cast the answers of 160 Norwegians (aged 13-19) on climate change responsibilities and solutions against the backdrop of ecological citizenship.

⁵ The authors are referring to the Norwegian population, but the argument need not be confined to it.

1.2. Research questions and hypotheses

The thesis operates with the following research questions (RQs):

RQ1: *Where do millennial African students in Norway assign responsibility to combat climate change?*

A related research question underpin this enquiry:

RQ2: *Do millennial African students in Norway hold sustainable development views indicative of ecological citizenship?*

By millennial, the thesis refers to the increasingly common category cohort of people born between the 1980s and the early 2000s (Thingsted, 2019), and more specifically the age group 18-30. ‘Responsibility’ refers to both perceptions of blame and guilt in creating climate change, as well as perceptions of who should bear the burden, and thus act to combating it. RQ1 looks into both how the informants assign responsibility, as well as to whom this responsibility is assigned. In addition, it relates to both the private and public sphere, the central arenas for citizenry activities in ecological citizenship. The thesis utilizes citizenship theory, and extensively operationalizes different forms to investigate whether the informants can be characterized as having sustainable development views indicative of ecological citizenship.

1.3. Delimitations

How people attribute responsibility for causing and for combatting climate change is a wide research area, and this undertaking can only offer a glimpse into a few essential aspects. The thesis is particularly concerned with non-reciprocal relationships and issues relating to ‘privatization’⁶ of environmental responsibility. Ecological citizenship is well suited for this approach. The theoretical interest into climate change perceptions is delimited to millennial African students in Norway, a feasible point of departure for a master’s thesis, and relevant to bridge a research gap in ecological citizenship literature. Qualitative interviews and ecological citizenship theory, from a literature review, form the basis of this study. Five informants shed valuable light on ecological citizenship theory, but do not allow for generalization. A bigger study would benefit from a larger pool of participants, not for generalization but for greater depth.

⁶ Introduced in section 2.1.1, discussed in section 5.2.

Use of citizenship theory attempts to highlight how globalization is challenging traditional understandings of citizenship and showcase original aspects of ecological citizenship. Moreover, it is essential to discuss other forms of citizenship in order to conclude whether the informants' sustainable development views relate most to ecological citizenship. The thesis cannot, however, provide an extensive view into different conceptions of citizenship-environment relations. Thus, it delimits itself to ecological citizenship and environmental citizenship, the most commonly discussed pair in the relevant literature. Literature on environmental justice is a salient concept in this field but pertains more to a rights-oriented thesis⁷. It is worth noting that the thesis is not chiefly concerned with the debate of who qualifies for ecological citizenship.

⁷ This thesis is more concerned with the individualization/privatization of environmental responsibilities.

1.4. Disposition

Chapter 1 – Introduction: Actualizes the need for ecological citizenship and for non-western voices in climate change literature with thoughts on motivation and relevance. Provides a backdrop to the thesis by emphasizing the need for climate action and the issue of ‘individualizing’/‘privatizing’ environmental responsibility. Introduces two research questions.

Chapter 2 – Literature review and theory: Presents globalization, neoliberalism, and sustainable development as they relate to the citizenship-environment discussion. Reviews liberal and civic republicanism as traditional citizenship theories, in which ecological citizenship emerges as a recent outshoot. Examines and critiques previous ecological citizenship research and operationalizes key terms and concepts by using environmental citizenship as a contrast.

Chapter 3 – Method: Details choices of method and how it bridges the aim of the thesis with the discussion. Explains data collection, selection of informants, and analysis with particular focus on the role of the qualitative researcher. Opens up on limitations, transparency, and trustworthiness.

Chapter 4 – Analysis: Presentation and initial analysis of empirical data. Introduces the main viewpoints of the informants as it pertains to ecological citizenship theory and compares findings with relevant literature. The structure mirrors the interview guide (Attachment 3).

Chapter 5 – Discussion: An in-depth examination of main findings as they relate to the research questions. Offers different views and arguments for how the informants contextualize climate change, and how this influences their views on responsibility and, in turn, their sustainable development views. Argues that the informants hold sustainable development views indicative of ecological citizenship.

Chapter 6 – Towards a stronger theory of ecological citizenship: Utilizes the analysis of empirical data in concert with criticisms in attempt to strengthen ecological citizenship theory. Introduces the conceptual mechanisms efficacy and ecological intent.

Chapter 7 - Conclusion: Summarizes the thesis’ main findings and offers some recommendations for further research.

2. Literature review and theory

The pursuit of relevant literature began in online, peer reviewed articles on environmental perceptions and climate change attitudes, with search words such as ‘environmental’ and ‘climate change’ with variations of ‘attitudes’, ‘responsibility’, as well as ‘behaviour’. The primary search engines were the library’s online search function (NTNU), the Web of Science, and Google Scholar. The thesis draws from sources in both English and Norwegian, though English predominantly⁸. In addition, several books on the environment, sustainable development, and political theory underpin the literature review.

This thesis is part of the emerging sustainable development narrative, and the focus on the ‘globalization of the environment’ (section 2.1) builds on a project report from an internship in South Korea (Granrud, 2019). If sustainability is the destination, ecological citizenship might be one of its vehicles. Therefore, the thesis should explain what the notion of sustainable development is, and why the destination is imperative. The thesis discusses neoliberalism as a common feature of globalization, and as a potential obstacle for sustainable development and ecological citizenship. Several figures and tables aim to visualize abstract concepts throughout the paper. Figure 1 denotes the chapter’s main structure, which begins with globalization and culminates in citizenship-environment theory.

Figure 1. From Globalization to Citizenship-Environment Theories

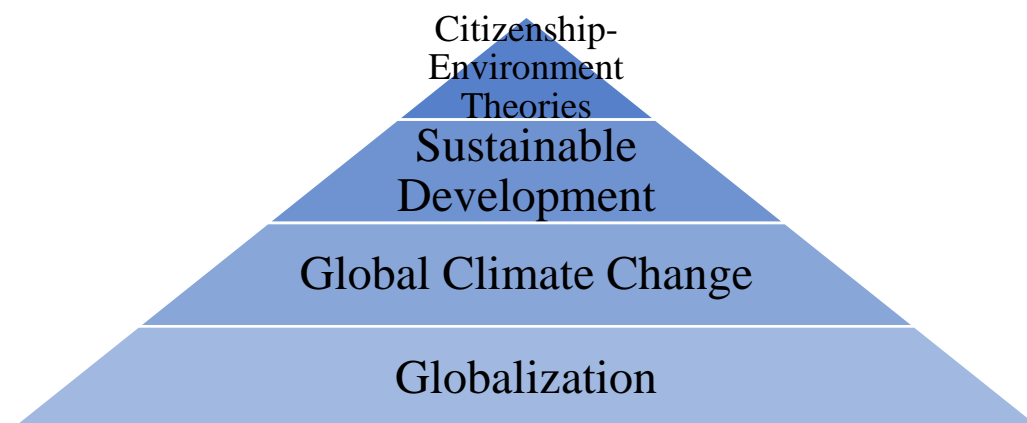


Figure 1: The core components in the literature review and theory section. Citizenship-environment theories, such as ecological citizenship, build from globalization, via global climate change, towards sustainable development.

⁸ The confines of bilingualism entail that some relevant literature remains unknown and/or unreadable.

2.1. The Globalization of the environment

“The environment is the most global system of all, but humanity has only recently become aware of this” (Oosthoek and Gills, 2008, p. 4)

2.1.1. Globalization and neoliberalism

Over 100 years has passed since the geographer Halford Mackinder observed how “interdependence would connect the nations of worlds and make the globe a ‘single organism’” (1919, as referred to in Knutsen, 2016, p. 462). Mackinder wrote in the context of unparalleled economic growth, in which integration into a global economy stretched farther and deeper than hitherto experienced, but which World War I terminated. The phenomenon would later be known as *globalization*. Harvey (1989) describes this process as ‘space-time compression’, and McGrew (2017) as “the widening, deepening, and speeding up of worldwide interconnectedness” (p. 16).

Dicken (2015) adds a useful distinction to the all-encompassing concept of globalization. Globalization can be analysed in its empirical and in its ideological form. The first refers to actual structural changes in the global economy’s organization and integration. Today, the economy is organized in global production networks. Dicken (Ibid.) contends that approaches to globalization must be firmly grounded, for example recognizing that a polluting activity must have a concrete geographical location, at a particular time, in a particular context.

The second point refers to the neoliberal “free market ideology of the ‘globalization project’” (Ibid., p. 3). Mackinder’s early observation accounts for this duality: the interdependence of nations in the empirical sense, but also in the larger sense, which he likened to an organism. This organism is where technologies integrate people into “worldwide nets of common knowledge and global awareness” (Knutsen, 2016, p. 463). In these nets, the rising global temperature and the melting of arctic glaciers are caught and subjected to global attention. The ideological form is the most salient in the thesis’ analysis, with emphasis on neoliberalism. Neoliberalism is another leitmotif to ecological citizenship, though not primarily with Dobson, seen as *primus motor* for the ‘privatization of the environment’ (Schindel Dimick, 2015) and co-driver of climate change itself. The subsequent paragraphs builds on globalization’s ideological side, which the discussion returns to (section 5.2).

Neoliberalism, at its core, is a theory of economy and politics (Harvey, 2007). As an ideology,

neoliberalism extends free market thinking into “nearly every sphere of human activity” (Schindel Dimick, 2015, p. 393). This spectre ‘haunts’ not only policies, but the basic ideas of the role of government. Gill and Law (1989)⁹ perceives this as a “conscious effort to change ideas and expectations about the appropriate role of government” (p. 481). Today, the world economy is largely market oriented with neoliberal characteristics (Dicken, 2015, p. 53). Globalization may exist without neoliberalism. Yet globalization has path dependently followed a neoliberal track since (approximately) the 1980s (Ibid.).

Neoliberalism’s relevance imposes itself to the environmental question in several ways. Following from the logic above, neoliberalism is claimed to have privatized the environment (both literally and ideologically). “Neoliberal ideology actively seeks to disavow the state from responsibility for the common good (e.g. clean environment), while individuals are increasingly asked to do more for the environment” (Schindel Dimick, 2015, p. 393). This raises vital questions for the traditional understandings of citizenship, to which ecological citizenship might provide useful answers.

2.2. Linking globalization to ecological citizenship

Ecological citizenship hinges on environmental awareness, especially for the global scale of the climate challenge. The next few paragraphs underscores ecological citizenship’s background by outlining some salient developments. Scholars have identified a globalization of environmental awareness (Donnelly, 1998, Eder, 1996, Oosthoek and Gills, 2008 esp, p. 4, Stevis, 2005). Several names describe this phenomenon, such as the ‘internationalization of the environment’ (Eder, 1996), yet the thesis refers to the *globalization of the environment* (Granrud, 2019, p. 7) to account for the empirical and ideological heritage it shares with globalization theory.

Ecological citizenship’s global scale is the culmination of a gradual globalization of the environmental crisis over the years. Oosthoek and Gills (2008) offer one simplified, chronological account of this. It begun in the 1950s with worries about chemicals and extended to concerns about population growth and economic development in the 1960s and 1970s, before finally directing its attention to distinctly human activities in the 1980s (Ibid., pp. 2-3). Thus, they identify the first global environmental threat to be a result of the “thinning of the

⁹ The authors refers to ‘Thatcherism’, as two of neoliberalism’s chief proponents were that of UK Prime Minister Thatcher and US President Reagan. This is omitted for consistency reasons.

stratospheric ozone layer over the polar regions of the globe” and the second, “global warming, caused by the massive use of fossil fuels releasing large amounts of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere” (Ibid.).

As problems grew bigger (or at least its perception), so did the international commitment – for example through the creation of institutions. Eder (1996) traces the globalization of the environment, i.e. its management, back to the 1972 UN sponsored ‘the Conference on the Human Environment’, which elevated “environmental decay to the international stage” (p. ix). This interpretation relates to Stevis (2005) paradigmatic definition of ‘globalized’, where the global threat of climate change has been ‘globalized’ through conferences, formations of environmental organizations, and treaties. Ecological citizenship points out the acknowledgement that “many environmental problems are international problems ... and that they are *constitutively* international in the sense that they do not, cannot, and will never respect national boundaries in their effects.” (Dobson, 2003, p. 97, italics original).

One of the most salient results from this globalization came with the 1987 Brundtland Report¹⁰, and its publication of ‘Our Common Future’. It introduced ‘sustainable development’, defined as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (WCED, 1987, p. 41). The report popularized sustainable development for generations to come, and its intergenerational focus is a clear influence for ecological citizenship. ‘Our Common Future’ exemplifies how global problems are seen as requiring global solutions. It is ‘Our Global Future’.

Sustainable Development (with a capital ‘D’) is most notably codified by the UN Sustainable Development Goals. It replaced the Millennium Development Goals (2000-2015) and upgraded the ambition and commitment of its predecessor. The SDGs comprises of 17 Goals with 169 indicators in an attempt to guide global development efforts until its deadline in 2030, the ‘2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development’ (Choi et al., 2016).

Sustainable development can take on heterogeneous, unclear meanings. Redclift (2005, p. 213) argues that the expression has assumed several different since its coinage, and that some of them are mutually exclusive. The concern is that it becomes a mere slogan, which any cause can mobilize in its favour. Some researchers question the viability of sustainable development,

¹⁰ Named after Gro Harlem Brundtland, Chair of the World Commission on Environment and Development at the time.

for example with references to whether it is feasible to be both sustainable and aim for development (see Ibid. for an introduction).

The thesis cannot entertain this valuable debate in great detail. It suffices to say that roads to a sustainable society are unclear, and that some of these roads might be part of the problem and not the cure, but that the goal of sustainability itself is desirable. Dobson (2007) perceives sustainable development to be “at least as much about *values* as about techniques and technologies” (p. 283, italics added). With onset of a new decade, the SDGs are reaching its coda. The ‘fierce urgency of now’ is upon all those who strive for sustainable development.

2.3. The call for citizenship

This section extensively reviews how ecological citizenship is theorized and operationalized in the research literature. It identifies research gaps with suggestions to bridge them in section 6, ‘Towards a stronger theory of ecological citizenship’.

Sustainable development is of paramount interest to this author. It is the inspiration which drives this research project forward. Sustainable development is multifaceted and wide in reach, and thus offers several research angles. One of these is ecological citizenship, a theory from political philosophy associated with Andrew Dobson (e.g., 2003, 2006a, 2006b, 2007, 2005). Ecological citizenship is a recent concept which offers a unique approach to sustainable development, for example through its focus on values rather than technologies, as emphasized above. In its fourth report, the IPCC (2014) observes that:

stabilizing temperature increase to below 2°C relative to pre-industrial levels will require an urgent and fundamental departure from business as usual. Moreover, the longer we wait to take action, the more it will cost and the greater the technological, economic, social and institutional challenges we will face (p. v).

The means to achieve sustainability, and to stabilize temperatures, are extensive. They include a range of instruments. Several of these will be technocratic in nature, such as offshore wind (Granrud, 2019).

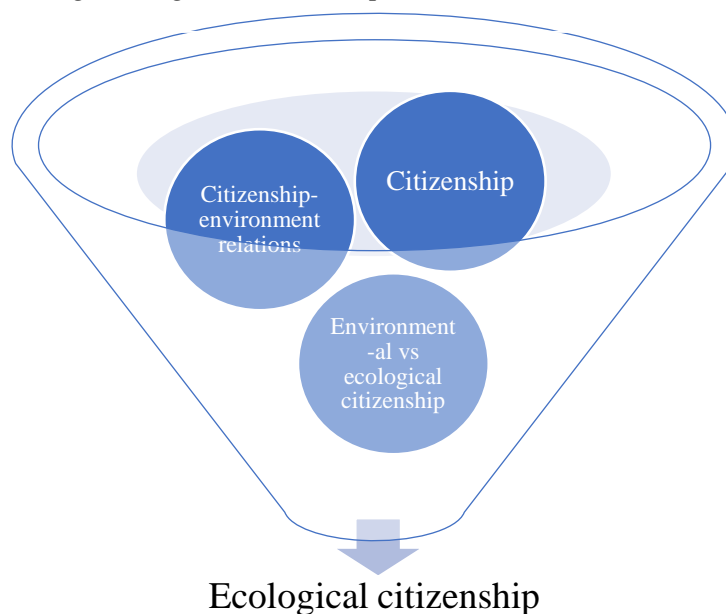
Citizenship appeals to something different, and may thus address the ‘social’ aspect as outlined above. Dobson and Valencia Sáiz (2005, p. 157) notes that citizenship-focus suggests that both citizens *and* governments are responsible for achieving sustainable development. There is a widespread conviction that “green politics should be fundamentally committed to democratic

processes” (Latta, 2007, p. 379), and employing citizenship into the climate change struggle could be a powerful argument. It is worth including Dobson and Valencia Sáiz’ (2005) assessment of ‘the turn to citizenship’:

the very enlisting of the idea implies a recognition that sustainability requires shifts in attitudes at a deep level – deeper than those reached by fiscal measures such as traffic congestion charging or charges levied on household waste. These measures only work, so the suggestion goes, as long as they are in place. They change behaviour, but they do not necessarily change attitudes – and if they are removed, behaviour could revert to type. The citizenship approach to sustainability, then, aims at attitudes, and it does so in part by drawing on a powerful commitment in citizenship theory and practice through the ages to the idea of the ‘common good’ (pp. 157-158).

This chapter embeds ecological citizenship into wider traditions of inquiry (Marshall and Rossman, 2016, p. 86), outlines essential aspects as they relate to the research project, and reviews relevant terminology. Environment-citizenship literature and self-created empirical data is the backbone of the discussion. Figure 2 visualizes the approach.

Figure 2. Funnelling Ecological Citizenship



2.4. Citizenship

A thesis which utilizes ecological citizenship as a means towards sustainable development should devote some time to discuss what citizenship actually means. Due to delimitations, ‘citizenship’ is only operationalized as it relates to the research goals. Some scholars examine citizenship practice in different countries, and what this entails for sustainability. Though valuable, it falls outside the scope of this endeavour. For a useful introduction, see Hayward et al. (2015).

The traditional unit of reference for understanding citizenship has been the state, “whereby rights, duties and membership are defined through more or less fixed spatial units and appear as politics of place” (Delanty, 2007, as presented in Rye, 2013, p. 148). By way of an example, this would mean that Norwegian-born ‘Kari Nordmann’¹¹ is automatically endowed a series of rights, responsibilities, and reciprocal (i.e. mutual, two-way) relationships in Norway. As Isin and Turner (2007) demonstrate:

... when people put investments into their states, they can assume that they have a legitimate claim on that state when they fall ill, or become unemployed, or become too old to support themselves. The past contributions to the community become the basis of legitimate claims on the ‘commonwealth’ (p. 16)

This reciprocal relationship is easily understood in the Norwegian welfare state – the government collects a tax on Kari Nordmann’s income, and she collects social benefits from the welfare state financed, in part, by her own contributions. Here, membership is tied to a traditional understanding of citizenship, which Dobson (2003) bluntly express as “no membership, no entitlement” (p. 116). Accordingly, if Kari Nordmann is not a ‘member’ of Norway (meaning no citizenship), she is not entitled to any of its benefits. Yet, as described later, globalization increasingly challenge such easily understood reciprocal relationships. Crucially, these relations are not advocated as an ideal by the likes of Dobson (Ibid.), it is how it usually works within the state.

Stokke (2013, p. 2) highlights four main dimension of citizenship: membership, legal status, rights, and participation. Membership and legal status are, as pointed out above, usually tied to the state. It remains true even if one recognizes the increasing globality of people and

¹¹ Norwegian multiple-use name.

transnational ties and identities (Hayward, 2006). If Kari Nordmann were an immigrant to Norway, she might not have membership or legal status, but could still participate in activities associated with citizenship. These are known as citizenry activities.

It is useful to discuss ‘acts of citizenship’ to understand the reasoning behind environmental acts in a citizenship perspective, and to illuminate Stokke’s (2013) citizenship category of ‘participation’. Normally, one considers voting as emblematic of an act of citizenship, but citizenship perspectives include other activities as well. To take a recent example (prompted by the informants’ examples in section 4.2; the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic has yielded behaviour one might associate with acts of citizenship. Self-isolation and social distancing among citizens are rooted in the goal of containing the disease. One does not venture outside in large gatherings as this might bring harm to others.

Consequently, one can interpret this as citizenry activities, as the concern for passing the virus on to others results in a restrained behaviour for oneself. As enlarged on later, acts of ecological citizenship adopts a similar harm principle-thinking akin to J.S. Mill (e.g. Mill and Collini, 2013). Involvement in affairs of common concerns to the civic community is what Stokke (2013, p. 10) sees the central meaning of participation.

Yet, citizenship is not bequeathed or passed down from one generation to another, it is learned (Allman and Beaty, 2002, in Isin, 2008, p. 17). Like a flower, citizenship requires cultivation, support, and a stable foundation (in the form of institutions) to blossom. For sustainability, this entails that environmental citizenry acts must be learned, with institutions to support its growth.

As Isin (2008) emphasizes, the newfound interest in citizenship studies has taught us that the citizenship is more than a legal status. It involves practices of *making citizens*, which includes social, political, cultural, and symbolic aspects (Ibid., p.17). The same is true for ecological citizenship, which aims to make ecologically conscious citizens. Section 2.7 returns to how Dobson (e.g. 2007) envisions these practices, while the discussion (5) adds perspectives from the qualitative interviews. As Rousseau wrote, “create citizens, and you have everything you need” (Rousseau, 1755, p. 11). Rousseau’s sentiment resonates well with civic republican citizenship, one of the two main strands of thought in citizenship studies.

2.4.1. Liberal vs. civic republican citizenship

Citizenship ‘orthodoxy’ is a theoretical bifurcation between liberalism and civic republicanism. This thesis will not deal with these in great depth, but an introduction is necessary to grasp the citizenship-environment discourse, and to follow the arguments introduced below. The most salient point, as shown in Figure 3, is that ecological citizenship is described as an outshoot from traditional citizenship studies.

Tersely, liberal citizenship and republican citizenship differ in their conceptions of rights and responsibilities. Liberal citizenship, with the rights of citizens centre stage, focuses, for example, on the right to vote and social security entitlements (Dobson, 2007, p. 280). Marshall’s (1950) classic definition of citizenship as “a status bestowed on those who are full members of a community” (as quoted in Schild, 2016, p. 21) resonates well with liberal citizenship. Here, membership guarantees one’s rights. To return to Kari Nordmann: in this perspective, she can claim environmental protection based on her rights as a citizen. These environmental rights can be the access to clean water and clean air.

Republican citizenship is more responsibility than rights oriented. It focuses on citizens’ responsibilities to the collective (Dobson, 2007, p. 280). Thus, liberal and civic republican perspectives offer different arguments for why people should be ecologically conscious. Jagers (2009) succinctly captures this:

The reason for republican citizens to be ecologically cautious is that there is a reciprocal gain within the community from preserving ecological resources, while the reason for liberal citizens is that they can claim some right or benefit in return. However, the main reason for *ecological citizens* is a responsibility to minimise their negative ecological impact on others (p. 20, italics added).

Table 1 is annexed and modified from Telle (2019), and presents some characteristics of the ideal types of both theories.

Table 1. Republican and Liberal Citizenship Orthodoxy

	Citizenship			Empowerment/Voice
	Rights	Duties	Compliance	Channels
Republican citizen	Public: community, member, voter, worker	Participation to define and promote common good of political community	With self- imposed rules	Equal membership in political community, elections
Liberal citizen	Private: individual, stakeholder, consumer	Engagement in political process to further private interests or protect private rights	With morally sanctioned (liberal) norms	Private resources: elite deliberation, technocratic expertise, lobbying

It should be pointed out that the inclusion of ‘private’ in the liberal citizen ‘rights’ bracket does not refer to the private sphere as an arena, but rather as the sphere where rights are endowed. Telle (2019) writes that:

A citizen’s relationship to the state is, thus, primarily that of a holder of legally guaranteed private rights in the pursuit of private interests. Politics is a means to achieve private ends and has no primacy over other life domains (p. 7).

Ecological citizenship relates more to the responsibilities of citizens than its rights, in the sense presented above. However, Dobson (2003) argues that globalization and environmental problems have exposed limitations of liberal and civic republican forms of citizenship. As argued, global problems tend to call for global solutions. In addition, civic republicanism does not seem to describe “the liberal world of today” (Jagers, 2009, p. 19). Dobson maintains that all current political ideologies fail to protect ecological systems (Schild, 2016, p. 20), hence he sees ecological citizenship as a *new* form of citizenship.

Figure 3. Citizenship-environment Theories

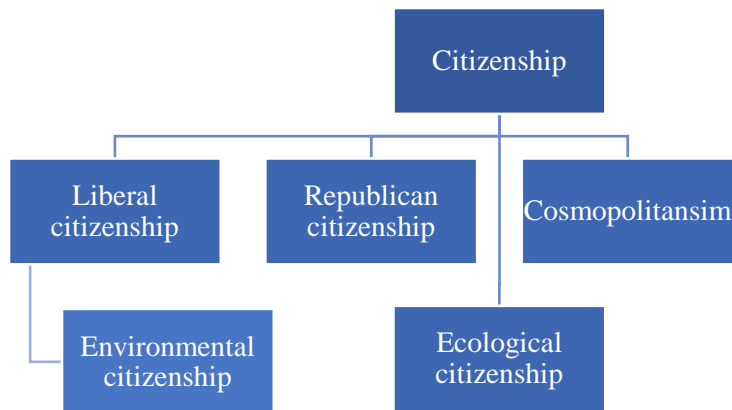


Figure 3: Stylistic view of citizenship theories. Environmental citizenship is an extension of liberal citizenship, whilst ecological citizenship an independent outshoot according to Dobson (2006b).

2.4.2. Cosmopolitan citizenship

Though this thesis cannot incorporate all branches of citizenship, it is worth pointing out the prominence of cosmopolitan forms of citizenship. This highlights ecological citizenship's global focus, and its 'non-reciprocity'. Cosmopolitanism shares a fundamental question with ecological citizenship: is the state the most appropriate container for citizenship? Dobson (2003) envisions ecological citizenship to be a form of 'post-cosmopolitanism'.

The difference between them is as follows: in cosmopolitan citizenship-thinking, obligations are owed by everyone to everyone (Ibid.). It almost echoes the slogan in *Brave New World* (Huxley, 2007), where 'everyone belongs to everyone'. What is new, is the substitution of the traditional container (the state) for a larger container, that of the world (hence 'citizen of the world'). Globalization creates relationships where our newfound closeness (time-space compression) and togetherness (global organism) make us responsible for *everyone*, not only our fellow citizens.

Ecological citizenship becomes *post-cosmopolitan* as these obligations are not owed by everyone to everyone but owed asymmetrically. It is based on one's ecological impact. To refute *Brave New World*, everyone does not belong to everyone. An ecological citizen would agree with the cosmopolitan view that globalization has created new, border-crossing responsibilities, but add that these are not equal because our ecological impact is not equal.

Figure 4. Non-reciprocity

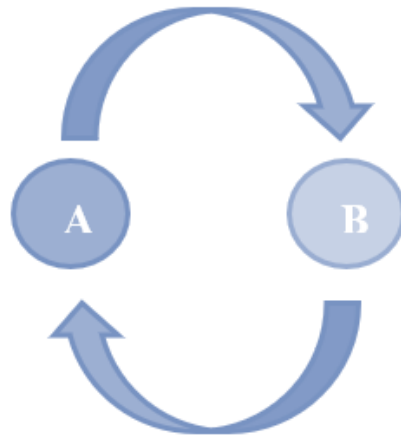


Figure 4: Basic reciprocal relationship: A helps B – B reciprocally helps A. Ecological citizenship is non-reciprocal, and B might not help A – if A has a bigger ecological footprint. This is non-reciprocity.

2.4.3. Globalization and citizenship

Citizenship is no longer only tied to the nation-state, and its territoriality has come into question (Dobson, 2003, Dobson, 2006a, Dobson, 2006b, Dobson, 2007, Isin and Turner, 2007, Rye, 2013, Rye and Kurniawan, 2017, Stokke, 2013). Rye and Kurniawan (2017) summarizes the development concisely:

This recent change in the understanding of citizenship is widely related to increased global connectivity among people and places due to the recent development of the neoliberal global economy, new patterns of migration and the rapid development of new means of communication, all of which render our connections to territorial categories, such as the state, more fluid (p. 3)

To summarize, citizenship is not static, but rather contested and evolving (Seyfang, 2006, p. 387). The globality of the climate change challenge, as discussed previously, points out a discrepancy between global problems and local politics. The international system is the framework within which states and individuals operate, but it does not determine the results. It is anarchic but ordered. Regulated but unenforceable. It is anarchic as no supreme authority can sanction the interaction between sovereign states. (Knutsen, 2016, p. 90). Yet international law, regulations, norms, geography, and interdependence help to order it. Isin (2008) concludes that “while citizens everywhere may be contained legally within state boundaries that enact

rights and obligations, their own states are not subject to such containment.” (p. 15). For example, states participate in the UN to co-ordinate climate change strategies.

Figure 5. Basic Levels of Analysis

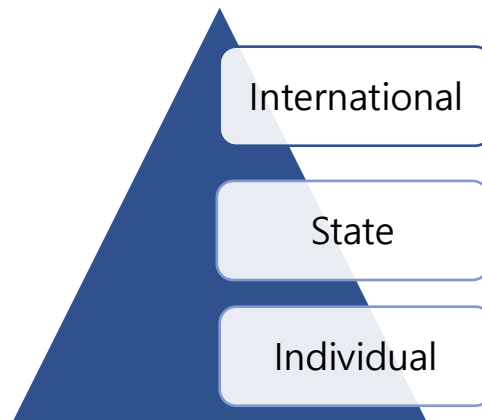


Figure 5: Other levels may be added, such as groups and communities between the state and the individual. Yet, the basic hierarchy remains.

Dobson (2003) asks whether the classic ideas of citizenship can exist “beyond the state” (p. 86). The ‘globalization of the environment’ has not caused a ‘globalization of citizenship’. (Ibid.) It is this tension, which has reinvigorated attention to the politics of citizenship. Taylor (2010) observes that “increased globalization and multiculturalism have accentuated territorial and cultural tensions within the modern model of citizenship, and thereby paved the way for ‘global’ and ‘cultural’ turns in citizenship studies” (in Stokke, 2013, p. 15, italics removed). The next section directs its focus to a particular global turn in citizenship studies, namely citizenship-environment relations.

2.5. Citizenship-environment relations

The onset of globalization, and the subsequent globalization of the environment, has brought forward several approaches which links citizenship and the environment, as visualized below.

Figure 6. *The Several Faces of Citizenship*



Figure 6: *The figure sorts the theories alphabetically, and only represents their relationship to the central concept of citizenship-environmental relations.*

The figure above draws from Melo-Escrihuela (2008, p. 114) and Dobson (2003, p. 96), and is an original way of presenting salient citizenship-environment theories. It represents the following: civic environmentalism (e.g. Orhan, 2008), ecological citizenship (e.g. Dobson, 2003), ecological republicanism (Curry, 2000), ecological stewardship (Barry, 2000), environmental citizenship (e.g. Dobson, 2007), environmentally responsible citizenship (Hailwood, 2005), green citizenship (Dean, 2001), and sustainability citizenship (Barry, 2006).

These are quite recent and emerged in a cluster around the millennium. They coincide with the MDGs and emergence of theories about sustainable development. Several of these build on each other, but differ in their perceptions of, for example, rights vs responsibilities. These theories are interrelated, and non-hierarchical. Their uses might sometimes be complementary; however, this thesis is not concerned by their differences and instead hopes to point out their coexistence. Dobson (2003, p. 89) prefers ecological citizenship, but contends that they are

working towards the same goal, which is the sustainable society.

2.6. Environmental citizenship and ecological citizenship

Dobson (2003) separates ecological citizenship and environmental citizenship. This thesis is concerned with ecological citizenship yet devotes some time for both to present the strengths of ecological citizenship compared to environmental citizenship. The former is preferred in part due to its emphasis on global obligations, non-reciprocity, the ecological footprint, and both private and public acts. In addition, this comparison clarifies Dobson's conception of the former as something new. It is useful to introduce ecological citizenship with references to a contrast.

A valid criticism, however, is the potential confusion of such distinctions. Some scholars place little emphasis on the difference between environmental citizenship and ecological citizenship (e.g. Selboe and Sæther, 2018) and others question if it is a new form of citizenship (e.g. Hayward, 2006). Furthermore, some articles are devoted to their distinctions (e.g. Melo-Escrihuela, 2008). The next section attempts to reconcile some confusion.

For the purposes of this analysis, 'ecological' denotes distribution and abundance of living organisms, and, vitally, relationships and interactions between them in their environment (Sharma, 2012). This distinction resonates well with Dobson's (2003) view on interactions between ecological citizens, and their non-reciprocal relationships. Here, citizens should reflect more on their relations and responsibilities towards each other within the same world (or their 'environment'). Dobson (2000) sets ecologism apart from environmentalism as it focuses "on the relationship between human beings and the non-human natural world" (p. 24).

Environmental citizenship is an extension of traditional liberal citizenship (as presented in section 2.4.1). To continue with the linguistic theme, 'environmental' is a normal premodifier of the established noun 'citizenship'. Dobson's (2003) 'ingenuity' lies in a supposedly new understanding of citizenship itself, in which the adjective 'ecological' adds information to the noun 'citizenship', as well as challenging the original meaning of citizenship itself. It should be noted that both Hayward (2006) and Seyfang (2006) question whether ecological citizenship is a new form of citizenship. Furthermore, Melo-Escrihuela (2008) and Wolf et al. (2009, p. 507) contests its practical application. The former criticism falls outside the thesis' reach, while the discussion returns to the latter (section 6).

The thesis now turns to unpacking ecological citizenship with a view of operationalizing several key concepts for the discussion. Dobson (2003) introduces several of these when he writes that ecological citizenship:

deals in the currency of non-contractual responsibility, it inhabits the private as well as the public sphere, it refers to the source rather than the nature of responsibility to determine what count as citizenship virtues, it works with the language of virtue, and it is explicitly non-territorial. (p. 89)

Non-contractual (or simply ‘not mutual’) relationships, private/public spheres, sources of responsibilities (ecological footprint), virtues, and non-territoriality are the main topics for the next paragraphs. The citation presents a number of distinctions between environmental citizenship compared to ecological citizenship. Table 2 highlights the ideal types.

Table 2. Environmental Citizenship and Ecological Citizenship

	Environmental Citizenship	Ecological Citizenship
Type of citizenship	Extension of liberal citizenship	New form of citizenship (‘post-cosmopolitan’)
Level of analysis	State centric	Not state centric (non-territorial)
Sphere of environmental acts	Public sphere	Private and public sphere (ecological footprint)
Most emphasis on rights or responsibilities	Rights	Responsibilities
End goal	Sustainability	Justice

2.7. Ecological citizenship

This thesis identifies five central differences which distinguishes Dobson’s (e.g. 2007) concept of ecological citizenship from environmental citizenship. These distinctions underpin the thesis’ preferences for ecological citizenship. As established, both are separate theories of citizenship-environment relations as well as different interpretations of citizenship itself (hence the label ‘type of citizenship’).

The next salient difference is the levels of analysis they utilize. Traditional citizenship theories are state centric (section 2.4.1). In ecological citizenship, rights and responsibilities are refocused to include the global environment. Environmental problems do not respect national boundaries, and its problems are asymmetrically caused and experienced (Dobson, 2006a, p.

229). Dobson (2007) asserts that “self-interested behaviour will not always protect or sustain public goods such as the environment” (p. 280). A potential objection might be Dobson’s (Ibid.) moral underpinnings, which could be a barrier for ecological citizenship appeal. Self-interested behaviour is a powerful motivation.

Nonetheless, Dobson (Ibid) extends the scope of harm principle-thinking (J.S. Mill) globally. An individual’s actions should only be limited to prevent harm to others – and an individual’s ecological footprint have global consequences¹². An ecological footprint is an estimate of “the resource consumption and waste assimilation requirements of a defined human population or economy in terms of a corresponding productive land area” (Wackernagel & Rees in Hayward, 2006, p. 438). This global focus is a strength of ecological citizenship, and accounts for globalization processes to a greater extent than environmental citizenship.

In addition to an international scope, ecological citizenship entails obligations to poorer and vulnerable people. It assigns responsibility on the present towards the unborn, as in ‘Our Common Future’ (WCED, 1987). In *Common Sense*, Thomas Paine (1776), whose ideas affected citizenship in the US, wrote that:

[T]he first principle of civilization ought to have been, and ought still to be, that the condition of every person born into the world, after a state of civilization commences, ought not to be worse than if he had been born before that period (p. 84).

While Paine’s point was conceived in the infancy of the US, Dobson’s homologous notion refers to a state in its maturity, in which climate change, not war, is the main threat for future generations. Ecological citizenship’s post-cosmopolitan nature, as presented above (2.4.2), mainly bestows obligations towards “distant strangers, human and nonhuman, in space and time” (Dobson, 2003, p. 8).

By ‘sphere of environmental acts’, it is referred to the old dichotomy of the private and public sphere. This is crucial for the argument of ‘privatization of environmental acts’ discussed in section 5.2. Traditionally, citizenship is concerned with public acts (Selboe and Sæther, 2018 p. 186), but ecological citizenship incorporates the private sphere as well. Dobson (2003) defines the private sphere as either:

¹² Consider, for example, the ecological footprint from a transcontinental flight. These emissions are not contained to the country of departure nor arrival.

the physical space within which people's lives are produced and reproduced (such as apartments, houses, mobile homes), or the realm of relationships usually regarded as 'private' (such as those between friends and family) (p. 135).

Liberal citizenship regards the private sphere as almost sacrosanct, in which the business that goes on within one's home is, exactly, private. In their analysis on individual emissions saving actions, Wynes and Nicholas (2017)¹³ identifies environmental actions which relate to the private sphere. The authors discuss efficacy of actions, which is key for the thesis' attempt to strengthen ecological citizenship theory in section 6. Eating a plant-based diet has a high emission savings impact, whilst washing clothes in cold water, recycling, and hang drying clothes have moderate impacts (Ibid., p. 4). Having one fewer child is identified as the most emissions saving action by far, but this is contested by van Basshuysen and Brandstedt (2018)¹⁴. Whether offspring belongs to the private sphere does not matter from an ecological citizenship perspective. The distinction is irrelevant, as private, and public acts contribute to one's ecological footprint. Tersely, "private acts can have public consequences" (Jagers, 2009, p. 20).

The inclusion of the private sphere invites two criticisms – first, a lack of clarity as to whether an act constitutes ecological citizenship or not, and, second, assigning responsibility on the individual and not the society. Individual actions can have positive or negative consequences for the environment, yet it does not follow from this that an action with a positive consequence is an act of ecological citizenship. Environmental citizenship and ecological citizenship are fuzzy on this point. According to the oft-cited criticism from Melo-Escrihuela, they risk accommodating anything related to pro-environmental actions (Melo-Escrihuela, 2008, Melo-Escrihuela, 2015, p. 166). There is no immediate conclusion to whether recycling, eating a plant-based diet, or avoiding plastic bags (different impacts) constitute ecological citizenship activities. At the same time, Capstick et al. (2015) identifies a normalization of pro-environmental lifestyles in recent years. Schindel Dimick (2015) and Maniates (2001) discuss individualization/privatization of responsibility. These activities should not be seen in isolation, and the discussion returns to these points (esp. section 5.2).

¹³ The study is only concerned with Co2 emissions, whilst an ecological footprint is comprised of wider measures.

¹⁴ The authors question whether parents can be responsible for their children's future emissions (carbon legacy).

Individual acts, which then become acts of citizenship, create ecological footprints. Thus, to be consistent with ecological citizenship thinking, these actions generate obligations which are, in turn, not confined to the state. “Just as environmental problems cross political boundaries, so do the obligations of ecological citizenship” (Dobson, 2003, p. 120). They are wide-reaching, extending through time and space, and intergenerational in focus (Ibid., p.106). The ecological impacts of this generation is inherited by the next. It is now clear that ecological citizenship sees both responsibility for creating climate change and the obligations to act in a global perspective.

Furthermore, obligations are non-reciprocal as diverse individuals have different ecological footprints. The obligations of a Norwegian citizen are, on average, higher than that of a Ghanaian citizen (Global-Footprint-Network, 2020). Acts of citizenship will “bring individuals into conflict with political and economic structures whose intentions are profoundly unsustainable, and at this point ecological citizenship will demand collective as well as individual action.” (Dobson, 2003, p. 103). Such conflicts may arise when an individual with a high ecological footprint attempts to undertake sustainable activities in an otherwise unsustainable society.

The final point of Table 2. notes that ecological citizenship’s end goal is justice, rather than ‘simply’ sustainability. From the *environmental* citizenship standpoint, whether the end goal is just or not is outside the theory’s scope as long as it is sustainable. For *ecological* citizenship, it cannot be sustainable unless it is just, and it cannot be just unless it is sustainable. Ecological citizenship’s first virtue is justice which “aims at ensuring a just distribution of ecological space” (Dobson, 2003, p. 132).

The kernel of Dobson’s conception of justice is that, first, ecological space is a universal right, in its access to or use of (Hayward, 2006, p. 444). Second, in recognizing the inequalities of the current distribution of these ecological spaces, there is an obligation of the beneficiaries of these inequalities to redistribute. This is what Hayward (Ibid.) sees as an ‘ecological debt’. Third, the beneficiaries of the inequalities are obligated to reduce their own footprint. By inhabiting the same planet, humans are bound together (Mackinder’s organism). They have a responsibility and an obligation to work towards justice.

2.7.1. Criticism of ecological citizenship

The literature review has engaged with criticisms of ecological citizenship. A few additional critiques follows. As discussed above, it is unclear which actions one can connect to ecological citizenship, and which acts one cannot. The impression from Dobson's canon of work suggests that the container is wide. Nonetheless, while most actions can fit in the container, it is unresolved which *persons* are allowed, as Hayward (2006) observes:

the puzzling result that not everyone is or needs to be an 'ecological citizen': only those responsible for harms need to be, not the victims. The ties of citizenship bind in one direction only, on the beneficiaries of the inequalities; the others are effectively cast in the role of 'moral patients'. This account does not establish clearly whether there is any political community which includes the 'victims' as citizens (p. 439).

Although Dobson (2006b) strongly repudiated a characterization of 'patients', an uncomfortable question remains as to whether only individuals with high ecological footprints can be ecological citizens. Instead of characterizing some as 'victims' or 'patients', it suffices to say that Hayward (2006) postulates that those with low ecological footprints cannot be ecological citizens. This runs the risk of simply colouring the west (on average higher footprints) as those who should be ecological citizens, and the rest as those who cannot be ecological citizens.

Yet, while the material¹⁵ conditions in 'the global North' as compared to 'the global South' on average yields higher ecological footprints in the former rather than the latter, the point of ecological citizenship is that these transcends borders. Hence, the variation of ecological footprints within states are crucial. In addition, if those with a low ecological footprint, who cannot be ecological citizens in Hayward's (2006) view, are 'freed' from their obligations, they might increase their ecological footprints, and thus deserve to become ecological citizens.

2.8. Chapter summary

Climate change is a global phenomenon which requires global solutions (Oosthoek and Gills, 2008). Yet, at a time when the state is increasingly challenged as the appropriate container for citizenship (Stokke, 2013), traditional citizenship conceptions remain state centric (Dobson, 2003). A call to citizenship (Dobson and Valencia Sáiz, 2005) seeks to harness the global

¹⁵ Revisited in section 5.1.1.

potential of citizenry action through ecological citizenship. This chapter has thoroughly reviewed ecological citizenship literature and operationalized its key concepts. Ecological citizenship includes both the private and the public sphere as a scene of citizenry activities, which opens up for criticisms relating to privatization of environmental responsibility (Schindel Dimick, 2015). The thesis connects this with efficacy of actions (Wynes and Nicholas, 2017)

As discussed in relation to Table 2, ecological citizenship is non-territorial, highlights asymmetrical responsibilities, and non-reciprocal relationships. These factors are valuable methods for answering RQ2. The informants' sustainable development views are applied to this framework in Table 7. Frequent use of visual information aims to clarify abstract conceptions of citizenship. These concerns are tackled in the next section, where deliberate choices in method allows the interview guide (Attachment 3) to ask questions which the informants can relate to. Furthermore, the interview guide adopts and reshapes the key characteristics of ecological citizenship into questions which are analysed in section 4.

3. Method

This chapter shows how the project's original idea was transformed and operationalized with choices in method. The thesis diverges from its initial plan in a few areas due to the Covid-19 pandemic. However, a butterfly is not judged by how it looked as a caterpillar – a thesis will metamorphose into something different, but the original DNA still remains.

3.1. Research design

“If you want to know how people understand their world and their lives, why not talk with them?” (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009, p. xvii)

Kvale and Brinkmann's (Ibid.) straightforwardness captures some of the reasoning behind the choice of methods. With the avalanche of quantitative research on climate change attitudes, qualitative interviews can put a human face on the myriads of statistics. Capstick et al. (2015) believe that “quantitative longitudinal evidence can be criticised for presenting an overly simplistic view of people's beliefs and values” (p. 725). Naturally, one needs both to understand climate change and its responses.

The germinal idea behind this research project is an academic interest in the ways responsibility in climate change matters are handed onto others (as reported in Pidgeon, 2012). The choice of methods should not only reflect a suitable strategy for creating and analysing data, but also appeal to one's interest. Qualitative methods allows the researcher to explore, in-depth, issues which are unique to the experiences of the informants. It gives insight into how different phenomena are experienced and perceived.

This becomes even more attractive considering the lack of engagement of ecological citizenship theory with non-westerners in particular, and a lack of empirical, supporting data in general. Selboe and Sæther's (2018) qualitative study is one of the few which employs ecological citizenship theories to qualitative data, while Jagers (2009) has utilized quantitative data. Both point out the need for additional actors in sustainability discourses. It is a frontier where expansion is the only way forward. Thus, a cross-sectional qualitative approach is employed as a means to complementing quantitative methods in studies of climate change perceptions and attitudes. Rigorous use of existing ecological citizenship literature allows for a deep understanding of the concept, and for comparing self-created empirical data with existing literature.

Different researchers hold different opinions on the extent to which a specific qualitative study can be generalized (King and Horrocks, 2010, Rudestam and Newton, 2015, Tjora, 2012). Yet, this thesis cannot generalize a non-representative sample to larger population. More precisely, this study investigates millennial African students in Norway, which is by definition different from citizens in their native countries¹⁶. Hence, the study has not aspired to do so. Rather, it seeks to showcase concepts, models, citations, and metaphors (Tjora, 2012, p. 215) whose relevance transcends the empirical data. With a sound theoretical departure, and with examples from relevant studies, it is possible to utilise the thesis' findings to further develop ecological citizenship (section 6).

3.2. Creating empirical data

The empirical data used to answer the research questions are *created* rather than gathered (Tjora, 2012). Prior to this study, the data did not exist. It is not gathered from conversations but created through qualitative interviews, underpinned by a systematic approach with specific methods. The thesis utilizes some interpretive lenses for understanding phenomena associated with social constructivism. This approach is favoured for the research design, as the study is concerned with individual perception of climate change. Furthermore, responsibility is a human concept. It requires construction and does not exist 'out there'.

People attribute responsibility to climate change in different ways – a central component of social constructivism, in which a phenomenon is interpreted heterogeneously (Moses and Knutsen, 2012, p. 9, Tjora, 2012, p. 21). This point of departure directly affects the way the qualitative researcher approaches the study. The qualitative researcher too is part of this construction of knowledge; hence interpretations of the informants' answers can alter meanings. Again, empirical data is created rather than gathered. While recognizing these ontological and epistemological implications, sound research methods aim to limit such contaminations of empirical data by being "honest and open about the way in which our contexts ... frame the way in which we come to understand" (Moses and Knutsen, 2012, p. 11). The next sections details this creation of empirical data, beginning with the informants, whilst section 3.4 returns to trustworthiness.

¹⁶ Millennial African students in Norway share a number of characteristics. One can also assume that there are similar socio-economic factors which allow them to study abroad. In this way, they are another category than simply 'Ghanaian' or 'Ugandan'.

3.2.1. *Selecting informants – size and strategy*

These paragraphs explain the decision to delimit the study to millennial African students in Norway. The choice of informants reflects a wish to address the research gap in ecological citizenship in a meaningful and practical way. Thus, the interest in the environmental opinions of young people as well as the desire to add non-western voices to the debate were married at the outset. Four main reasons underpin the age criteria, which results in the ‘millennial’ category.

First, unlike other generations, young people have grown up with climate change on the agenda, and are more often worried about it than other age groups (Thingsted, 2019). ‘Diana’, an informant, contextualizes this as a ‘background noise’ to her upbringing. *Second*, young people have less influence than older people, and are less able to affect climate policies. *Third*, young people are in a formative period, and will develop lifelong habits with different ecological footprints (Wynes and Nicholas, 2017). *Fourth*, current climate change efforts will directly affect the world young (and unborn) people inherit (WCED, 1987).

‘Young’ refers to informants in the age group 18-30. This is naturally a generic delimitation but reflects the normal student age. In addition, the age group is often referred to as ‘millennials’, an increasingly common category in climate perception studies (Thingsted, 2019). One can, for example, contrast millennial views on climate change with other age groups.

As explained, the decision to add non-western voices to the debate prompted the desire to interview Africans, whilst the focus on citizenship prompted the desire to interview people with transnational ties. Trondheim has a large African student milieu. This milieu is relevant and practical for the research. First, and relating to relevance, these students came to Trondheim to study as young adults. Thus, they are international students with transnational ties, which affords an opportunity to study both the formation of their attitudes, and how transnationalism has changed them. Reflections on transnationalism builds on the post-cosmopolitan element of ecological citizenship and offers opportunities to ask about the transboundary challenge of climate change as emphasized in the research literature (Dobson, 2003, p. 97).

By virtue of being students, they do not, according to their own descriptions of their birthplace, represent the average citizen. This is in line with the hypothesis of the study, in which their different material conditions (i.e. focus on students and not, e.g., rural farmers) set them apart

from their community. The research wants to understand how this affects their perceptions, as such aspects are pertinent for citizenship studies.

Second, and related to practicality, the African student milieu consist of student organizations such as the NTNU Ghana Association, the point of departure for sampling informants with *the snowball method*. This choice is relevant for the research aims, as well as in compliance with Covid-19 guidelines. The snowball was set in motion by contacting a phone number of a leaflet by the NTNU Ghana Association at the school campus. The first informant was asked to recommend additional participants from community associates – not only members of the association¹⁷. The method for selecting informants have relied more on Ghanaian students than a research project without Covid-19 regulations in place. Nonetheless, the study's informants are relevant for this research.

3.2.2. *Limitations*

There is no standard basement or ceiling for the correct size of informants in qualitative research, it depends on the study's intention. Lack of resources limits a master's thesis scope, and this initial limitation yields some delimitations. Qualitative methods seek to harvest the full potential from a limited number of informants. While five interviews can shed considerable light on the research question, additional informants would be beneficial. A similar thesis conducted after the Covid-19 pandemic would have the benefit of taking a more active role in recruiting informants. This approach can help recruit more female participants and lower bias. Potential bias might arise from overrepresentation of Ghanaian students, or from the sampling technique which exclude potentially relevant participants outside of the informants' milieu. Three additional persons had agreed to participate prior to the pandemic but withdrew or did not reply afterwards.

¹⁷ The study is interested in millennial African students in Trondheim.

3.2.3. *The Qualitative Researcher*

Reflections relating to the ‘qualitative researcher’ answer to Rudestam and Newton’s (2015, p. 51) acid test – to show that the role of the a qualitative researcher is properly understood. The qualitative researcher should enter without a fixed agenda and with scientific rigor. It is vital to “understand, acknowledge, and share one’s own underlying values, assumptions, and expectations”. (Ibid.). By way of a literary example: Hitchens (2005) once visited an Indian ‘guru’ whose tent had a plaque stating: “shoes and minds ... must be left at the gate” (p. 23). The qualitative researcher cannot, naturally, leave his/her pre-existing knowledge at the gate. Yet, one should resist to force the empirical data in a procrustean bed to fit the hypotheses. As discussed later, some expectations relating to informants’ assessments of self-efficacy were formed by findings in Selboe and Sæther (2018). However, the interview guide deliberately avoids steering the informants. Thus, their views can surface without prejudice. The empirical data is coded without use of *a priori* theory, as section 3.3 highlights.

Another pitfall is to misunderstand the qualitative researcher’s role. It is salient to suppress the wish to engage with the informants in a discussion. The qualitative researcher is knowledgeable in the subject and might be tempted to ‘show off’. Likewise, the informants may be curious to know about the interviewer’s own experiences and knowledge. Hence, one ought to recognize and maintain *la règle du jeu*. As Krag Jacobsen (1993) underlines, both interviewer and informant must maintain their roles during the course of the interview. An interview is not a ‘normal’ conversation. In one session, the informant wanted to know what *I* thought would be the most appropriate measure to handle climate change (avoided with a promise to send the completed thesis).

Finally, for transparency reasons, it might be of interest to the reader to know that the researcher (me) belongs to the same age group as the informants (millennial cohort). Clearly, it instils anyone belonging to this group, and accepting the risk associated with climate change, a wish for action (whatever that means). This is an ethical consideration for the interview, and these attitudes were to the best of my ability, to return to Hitchens (2005), ‘left at the gate’.

3.2.4. *Semi-structural interviews*

The tautology is true – an interview guide in a semi-structured interview is a *guide*, and not a

fixed set of questions and answers. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) likens the interview guide to a script, one which can vary in how tightly structured it is. Like the skilled film director, one should not be confined by the script as a straitjacket, but rather see it as support. It is a key strength of the qualitative interview that it can be flexible (e.g. in phrasing and order) and allow the conversation to stray into new and exciting territory (King and Horrocks, 2010).

Thus, the thesis has deliberately sought a semi-structured interview as it allows for improvisation (Ringdal, 2013, p. 118). A small-N study such as this thesis benefits from allowing participants to talk more freely, as opposed to in highly standardized interviews. While the latter is easier to compare, as all participants answer the same questions, it requires meticulous planning and would better suit a large-N study. One of the advantages of allowing both parties to improvise became evident in the first interview. While ‘Brian’ initially could not find examples relating to citizenship activities, he was able to remind himself of participation in a regional community forum in Ghana through an improvised tangent. A focused qualitative researcher will then be able to direct these tangents back to the study’s goals.

3.2.5. Interview guide

The interview guide is included in ‘Attachment 3 – Interview guide’.

Table 3. Overview of Interview Topics

Topic	
Introduction	Background information
Theme 1	Perceptions of climate change
Theme 2	Responsibility in climate change
Theme 3	Responsibility for and among groups
Theme 4	Rights in environmental questions
Theme 5	Perceptions of self-efficacy

Table 3: The separation of the interview questions into five themes reflects the research interests, and a logical build-up of the questions. They were not, however, carved into stone.

Figure 7, as adapted from Tjora (2012), is the inspiration for the interview guide’s structure. It divides the interview into introduction, main part, and ending. The introduction seeks to build what King and Horrocks (2010) refer to as ‘rapport’ (i.e. harmonious) with the participants. It is “widely seen as a key ingredient in successful qualitative interviewing” (Ibid., p. 48). The

first few minutes were used as a ‘warm up’ exercise with simple questions, such as age and study program. This section seeks to relax the informants, and to steer the discussion towards the main topics. By asking where they came from, they began telling their own unique story, into which questions of climate change were later embedded.

Figure 7. Interview Structure

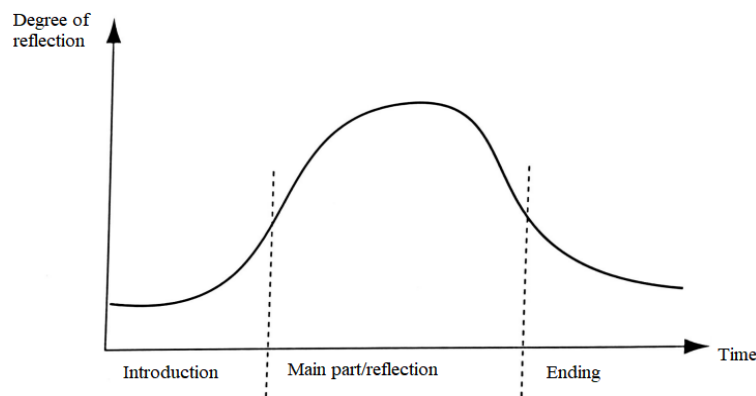


Figure 7: Gathered and adapted from Tjora (2012, p. 114, own translation).

The guide was altered during the course of research. Pilot interviews with colleagues helped to compress questions, reflect on issues of ‘leading’ informants, and experience the interview situation. As expected, the first interview produced some modifications. To exemplify, the initial interview highlighted some confusion on questions of environmental rights, later mended by changing ‘do people have any environmental rights ...’ into ‘should people have any environmental rights ...’. Consequently, the question seems less as a test of knowledge, and more as an inquiry into their own opinion.

The construction of the interview guide benefited from returning to the initial enquiry frequently. First to identify key themes connected to the research questions, and later to process these into fruitful questions with a language the informants would be comfortable with. Since the overarching interests in this project are abstract and complex, such as responsibility and citizenship, it is useful to approach the interview guide with an overt and a covert purpose.

Overt questions have no hidden motives with low degree of moderation in its language. For example, theme 2, question 1 (Attachment 3) asks “[is] there a responsibility to take climate action?”. The preceding conversation has operationalized the term ‘climate action’, but the word ‘responsibility’ is new. Hence, it is their understanding of the word which is of interest. By using the informants’ own words, it was possible to build logical bridges between themes

as well (e.g. ‘you mentioned justice’).

Covert questions do not entirely cover the researcher’s motivation in its language. To make the same point in a different way, the first question in the interview guide’s main part (Attachment 3) asks the informants to recall their initial encounter with the words ‘climate change’. The exact date and their age are largely non-essential, but it allows the conversation to begin, and for them to describe climate change (see 4.5. for more on this initial question). For example, Arnold, Brian, and John contrasted their knowledge of climate change now, compared with their lack thereof in their home country. Thus, they begin to address transnational aspects of climate change perceptions.

Another example to avoid over-abstraction is to ask for concrete actions the informants perform in their daily life. Here, they provide examples of activities which *they* connect to environmental awareness. This steers the participants towards more difficult concepts such as responsibilities and prevents the analysis of efficacy of actions (section 6) to be prejudiced by the interview guide. Adhering to a logical approach, questions of responsibilities precede those of rights.

3.2.6. Conducting the interviews

A few digital solutions had to replace the initial plan due to the extraordinary situation posed by the Covid-19 pandemic. First, informants signed and returned the information letter (Attachment 2) via email. Second, all interviews were conducted via the computer software Zoom or Skype for Business¹⁸. Each interview begun by clarifying the purpose of the research project, their consent, and their liberty to withdraw from the interview at any time. The interview was recorded with a Dictaphone and kept on the home area at the NTNU server to avoid local storage. Recording computer audio with a Dictaphone is not optimal, but preferable to using software. The latter method cannot guarantee safe storage to comply with NSD guidelines. Table 4 provides an overview of all interviews sorted by nationality.

¹⁸ This was largely unproblematic apart from a few instances of audio delay. Furthermore, all informants spoke excellent English which meant few language problems.

Table 4. List of Interviews

Number	Informant (pseudonym)	Duration	Country of origin
1	Brian	52:44	Ghana
2	John	1:03:37	Ghana
3	Christopher	1:00:21	Ghana
4	Arnold	45:57	Eritrea
5	Diana	50:58	Uganda

3.3. Analysis of data

All interviews were transcribed and coded in preparation for the analysis, and follows Tjora's (2012) stepwise-deductive inductive model (SDI-model). As the name suggest, the model is a stepwise approach from empirical data towards concepts or theories (Ibid., p. 175). First, text-close codes (Ibid., p. 182) are created inductively (i.e. not from theory or hypotheses). The litmus test is to consider whether the codes could have been devised *a priori* or not. Second, text-close, empirical codes from all interviews are compared and analysed with a view to create general codes reflecting the purpose of the study. These codes are referred to as sorted codes and build on theory. The SDI-model is a helpful approach which denotes the non-linearity of the qualitative process. While the process is stepwise, research is rarely linear. Table 5 gives an insight into this procedure.

Table 5. Coding Diana's Interview

Interview citations	Empirical codes (step 1)	Sorted codes (step 2)
“But still in the sense that a lot of the ... especially coming from a third world country, the ways we live is already very climate sensitive in terms of the packaging we’ve always traditionally used things like that uhm ... it does like feel we’re told to cut back in an unfair way	Told to cut back in an unfair way	Asymmetrical responsibility
“I do also in that acknowledge that yes, there is a role the individual must take towards this, and personally I take the standard being a knowledgeable consumer, and in that sense making decisions that are more sustainable”	Being a knowledgeable consumer	Environmental activities

Table 5: The SDI-approach initially develops empirical, text-close codes, and second, theoretically informed, sorted codes. The sorted codes form the basis for the subsequent categorization.

3.4. Trustworthiness

Section 3.2.1 noted on the validity of the informants. The following paragraphs discuss the trustworthiness of the study. The thesis recognizes the debate in qualitative research about the use of ‘validity’ and ‘reliability’ (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009, Marshall and Rossman, 2016, Tjora, 2012). It modestly favours ‘validity’ and ‘reliability’ as they are more common and recognizable than its alternatives¹⁹. Nonetheless, the terms are employed with an overarching reference to the *trustworthiness* of the study.

The following paragraphs discuss matters of trustworthiness as they relate to the interview guide, designed to capture the opinions and feelings of informants without ‘moralizing’ their answers. A difficulty in both qualitative and quantitative methods is to avoid social desirability bias, in which participants would feel a moral pressure to give answers perceived as ‘desirable’, even though they may hold a different, less popular opinion. Social desirability bias impedes

¹⁹ For example: ‘credibility’, ‘dependability’, and ‘transferability’ as alternatives.

the trustworthiness of the study, both in terms of validity (Tjora, 2012, p. 206) and reliability (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009, p. 245). This is true for environmental attitudes and behaviour too, in which eco-friendliness can be considered a social norm (Newhouse, 1990, in Oerke and Bogner, 2011, p. 713). Several measures seek to guard against this, beginning with the information letter (see Attachment 2) which emphasises that the researcher is interested in *their* opinion, hence the personal pronoun, but more importantly, the thesis is deliberate of its introduction of the term ‘climate change’.

All participants discussed climate change as a threat, yet an alternative route was in mind for sceptics or deniers. Subsequent questions in the interview guide assumes belief in climate change. Encounters with sceptics or deniers, of one form or another would require different questions. This consideration reflect the qualitative researcher’s role to avoid asking leading questions (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009, p. 245). A few different approaches influence the approach.

In Capstick et al. (2015), participants describe thoughts or images they associate with climate change. This approach fulfils the interview guide’s crucial ambition: to avoid ‘polluting’ the respondent’s subsequent answers with an early, moralizing question. Such a question allows the informants to set the tone, and to colour climate change with their own language and adjectives. Hence, the variation of the above (Ibid.) example: “what thoughts or feelings arise when you think about climate change?”. (Attachment 3, theme 1, question 2).

Villar and Krosnick (2011) ask their participants to select from a list of eight items what they perceived as the biggest threat facing the world as a whole (as reported in Schuldt et al. 2015, p. 75). Moreover, Austgulen and Stø (2013, p. 135) ask a series of question relating to trends, causes, and effects in climate scepticism. The first example influence the thesis’ question of whether they see climate change as bigger than other problems (leaving ‘problems’ to be defined by the informants²⁰). The second example, as well as Rye (2013), influence the thesis’ questions (theme 3) on climate change information and media portrayal. These questions seeks balance and opens for a wide range of responses, including those who do not see climate change as a problem/real.

Preceding this, however, is the much more conversational question of “Can you tell me about

²⁰ See attachment 3, theme 1, question 2, ‘related questions’.

the first time you heard about ‘climate change’?”. It is based on Kvale and Brinkmann’s (2009) notion that such opening questions “may yield spontaneous, rich descriptions where the subjects themselves provide what they have experienced as the main aspects of the phenomena investigated” (p. 135). In sum, the informants were able to offer nuanced perceptions on climate change, often with parallels to how these perceptions changed as they moved to Norway.

As the discussion highlights, the informants spent less time on assigning blame for climate change than discussing how to cope with it. Two possible concerns with respect to trustworthiness are relevant here. First, and not considered in this analysis, is the impact of religion in assigning responsibility or ‘blame’ for causing climate change. Some of the informants highlighted their Christian faith, and it is unknown to what extent this shapes their assessments. Second, by being a ‘westerner’, my role as the qualitative researcher might have prompted social desirability bias as the informants’ might find it uncomfortable to direct blame towards Norway. These considerations reflect the qualitative researcher’s inability to remove himself/herself from the interview situation.

With this in mind, an overarching openness about the role of the qualitative researcher, detailing scientific interest in the topic but also restraint and measures to be as ‘neutral’ as possible, underpins the reliability of the study. Academic interest in the field is reshaped as an instrument which nurtures interviews with the informants, for example by being able to ask informed follow-up questions relating to environmental policies.

The thesis strives to hold true to a reliability standard of qualitative research. A different qualitative researcher should be able to produce (largely) the same results from the same data material, and should be able to understand how my role as the researcher shaped the analysis (Tjora, 2012, p. 206). Interpretations (such as describing ‘equanimity’ in section 5.1.2) reflects a conscious decision to extrapolate more from the conversation than the citations allow for. Strong transparency on behalf of the qualitative researcher entails greater trust in the accuracy of these interpretations. Moreover, Dictaphone-use strengthens the reliability of citations and allows for accurate transcriptions. The discussion includes several citations from the informants which attempts to illuminate (though narrowly) the informants’ position with a low degree of interpretation from the researcher.

3.5. Ethical reflections

Ethical considerations are more than providing a form for the informants to fill in, rather, it is a concern which should permeate every aspect of the project – from anonymity to transparency. NSD has approved the research design for this thesis (Attachment 1). All informants were aware of their right to withdraw their answers or their participation at any time, as stipulated in the letter of consent they signed (Attachment 2). Their real names were substituted with pseudonyms and not recorded.

The preparation of the interviews were used to contemplate if cultural or power dimensions would pose problems. Naturally, it might be intimidating for the informants to be alone with an interviewer, especially since it could be their first time. On the other side, an interview is a rare opportunity for the participants to be *heard*. The attentive interviewer and the nature of the research enables the informant to feel that their opinions, on an issue they probably care about, matter.

3.6. Chapter summary

The method section strives to uphold standards of transparency by showcasing decisions during the course of the research, with particular ontological and epistemological focus on the role of the qualitative research. Qualitative interviews were performed to create empirical data and later categorized by coding. The next section outlines initial findings with an analysis of data and research questions.

4. Analysis

The thesis aims to understand where millennial African students in Norway assign responsibility to combat climate change (RQ1). This relates to how and to whom they assign responsibility. Through this, the thesis further aspires to assess whether they hold sustainable development views indicative of ecological citizenship (RQ2). Accordingly, the next section presents initial findings through an analysis. The structure mirrors the interview guide (section 3.2.5).²¹

4.1. Background information

Five semi-structural qualitative interviews is the basis for the subsequent analysis, created from research of millennial African students enrolled in Trondheim. One participant, Diana, has finished her studies to work in South Africa. The number of African students in Trondheim is limited, hence their particular field of study is not identified, nor their specific age. Both measures intend to protect their identity. All participants belong to the 25-30 age cohort, and thus the millennial category. The table below introduces them alphabetically.

Table 6. Introducing the Informants

Pseudonym	Country of origin	Field of study (general)	Time in Norway
Arnold	Eritrea	Social science	Two years
Brian	Ghana	Social science	Since August 2019
Christopher	Ghana	Natural science	Two years
Diana	Uganda	Natural science	August-December 2019
John	Ghana	Social science	Two years

4.2. How do the informants contextualize climate change?

4.2.1. Examples of global perspectives

- Maybe in Africa you may think that they are suffering, it is their problem, it is not my problem. Why should I take it to be my problem? But it is just like the pandemic that just happened. By time it will get to you. We live in a globalized world. We help them to solve it and prevent it

²¹ Headline names are in some instances altered.

from spreading. – Christopher

- When this Covid-19 came, we thought it was only in China, so people were really not much concerned about it. But now it's in their home and everybody is talking about it, everybody is being cautious. Maybe the more I insist on them doing the right thing, even if it is difficult in the beginning, it will get much easier. – Brian

The interview guide's second category (perceptions of climate change) attempts to understand how the participants contextualize climate change. It is necessary to understand what they *mean* by climate change before one can turn to assigning responsibility. The method section reflected on the aim to capture a diversity of climate change opinions and to avoid moralizing the informants' answers. All participants believe that the climate is changing due to human activities and believe there is a responsibility to combat it.

They contextualize climate change in a global perspective and as a structural problem, as the citations above attempts to illustrate. Climate change is likened to Covid-19 in that both were 'invisible' and far away. At first, the west did not think the pandemic would become their problem, which the informants see as analogous to climate change as it disproportionately affects non-western countries.

To describe these differences, they create contrasts such as the global North vs. South, rich vs. poor, and the west vs. Africa. The creation of contrasts largely correspond with what Selboe and Sæther (2018) reports from their empirical data, in which Norwegian participants make similar distinctions based on both geography and wealth. In this thesis there is a role reversal, the informants are from African states, and describe this region as both 'the global South' and as part of 'poorer' countries. Their views indicate material points of departure. Certain material conditions must be present for the life of ideas to prosper. Hence, resource availability within these contrasting geographies are crucial for their ascription of climate change responsibility.

4.2.2. Examples of material points of departures

- The people who live in poorer countries think about how they can have lunch. Maybe education is the best way to make all understand it. – Arnold
- Where your position is determines the kind of conversation that is being entertained. If you are in Ghana, people like my parents, it would be kind of strange if I were to tell them about climate change. They don't see it as one of their problems. They don't even see it as real. – John

- I always get the sense that, if there's any people willing taking on practical solutions, but it's not practical to tell a country where not a lot of people have electricity that they should stop using charcoal. – Diana

They describe material limitations in the global South which do not exist in its northern counterparts, and how these are created and sustained by injustices. Climate change is further portrayed with references to exploitation, inequality, consumerism, and greed. These relationships are unidirectional, with 'them' belonging to exploited countries, victims of consumerism and greed in 'rich'/global North countries. Similar contextualizations of climate change is reported by Capstick et al. (2015, p. 735), who have found such ideas consistently in British informants between 1997-2010. The authors see this as a climate change discourse focused on cultural and societal phenomena resulting from contemporary ways of living. Although the informants largely see their home countries as environmentally sensitive (i.e. lower ecological footprints), there are examples of how contemporary ways of living are contributing to environmental degradation there as well.

Diana shares a childhood memory of buying meat wrapped in banana leaves. Now, plastic wrapping has replaced its organic predecessor. She laments this evolution and recommends reverting to the past custom for the sake of the environment. This particular example is indicative of Diana's focus on practical solutions and how different states must do what is best for them. Her sentiment relates more to the capacities of different nations, and less to their overall responsibility which she still cast in a global perspective.

Several of their examples are reflections which emerged after coming to Norway. Thus, native lifestyles are cast in a new light with references to, for example, strict recycling regulations and nature protection laws in Norway. Recycling is a common task they relate to environmental activities. It is a tangible, daily chore. Forestry is of particular concern to the Ghanaian informants, who criticise unregulated practices in Ghana. These are transnational reflections and show how they perceive climate change in both directions: African countries can learn from countries such as Norway but, crucially, countries such as Norway can learn from Africa too. Norway have capacities, both in technology and through wealth, but also in climate change knowledge. African countries are described as more climate sensitive, more in harmony with nature, and without excessive lifestyles. Thus the descriptions of African countries bear resemblance to Dobson's (2007) point that ecological citizenship appeals to values and

attitudes, not primarily technology.

As revisited, the focus on capacities as opposed to ‘blame’ prevails among all informants. Coupled with a positive view of their own ability to do something meaningful for the environment, it leads to a moderately positive outlook on the future. In this context, they discuss ‘solutions’ to climate change. Changing attitudes and values, whilst bridging inequalities are frequent points, with education as the most vital driver for remedying these. They tend to discuss solutions connected to civic activities or, more broadly, citizenship in lieu of technology. Brian is the only informant who contemplates technology matters, but consistently with references to the exploitation which drives the progress of “green technology” (Brian) in developed countries.

This thesis has echoed a call to citizenship (Dobson and Valencia Sáiz, 2005), partly inspired by the IPCC’s (2018b) warning of relying too much on technological fixes. Earlier climate change literature have identified differences in understanding the nature of the climate change problem, i.e. whether it is a technical/scientific problem, or one based on values as power-structures. Schild (2016, p. 28) notes that it is a common political position in the US to see environmental problems as a technical/scientific issue, where technology will play *the* instrumental role in achieving sustainability. Similar hopes on technological fixes is reported in Kellstedt et al. (2008).

Science and technology is crucial among the young Norwegians interviewed by Selboe and Sæther (2018), who are largely technology optimists. As a contrast, the millennial African students in is study do not see technology as the most salient measure towards sustainable development. To them, structural problems and material differences are more pronounced. The study cannot, however, generalize this finding to any larger group.

4.3. Responsibility

4.3.1. Examples of responsibility based on ecological footprints

- I don’t think I’m responsible. If you look at the drivers of global warming. Climate change rely the most, the most destabilizing drivers are a few people. A few countries ... I believe some countries are polluting more than others. They should be more responsible than someone like me, who are have stayed in Ghana and never owned a car. So, it’s kind of difficult to accept responsibility. But there are other people, other countries who deserve to be more responsible. –
John

- I think in the fight against climate change a lot of emphasis is being put on what the individual should do, but a lot of the problems we got is from what organization are doing. And I honestly think what we should, the amount of focus we use on policing and focusing on individuals should rather be shifted to the largest scale, on a larger scale, one that is a lot easier to manage, and it's orders of magnitudes larger than what the individual can do. – Diana

Diana's citation is an appropriate illustration of their focus on abilities rather than blame. The first half of the excerpt discusses organizations (a wide container) as a greater source of problems (driver of climate change) than individuals. She is concerned that the burden is shifted on the individual as opposed to the source of the problems – discussed later with reference to 'the privatization of the environment'. Yet, the latter half of the citation changes from addressing problems to what *can be done* whilst maintaining the standard that some are more responsible than others. Thus, an ecological footprint is a source of responsibility as well as an indicator of capacity. Once again, the material point of departure is pronounced.

The millennial African students in this study are not clear on the extent of individual responsibility. They assign responsibility to the collective, but also to the individual. There are calls for everybody to "do their bit" (Brian), but also a recognition of the limits of individual action. The preceding quotations attempts to capture how they grapple between actors and structures. Although it might seem contradictory, it reflects the complexity of the climate change problem. Contemplations of this sort is reported in Selboe and Sæther (2018, p. 188), where young Norwegian students wrestle with tensions between individuals and the collective, and actors and structures. Ecological citizenship reflects the ongoing struggle between global issues and local governance. There is no supranational entity with power to enforce climate politics, or a supranational polity one can belong to (Dobson, 2003), as pointed out in the literature review.

Coexisting with this contradiction is a sense of keeping climate change at an arm's length. While they recognize its threat, they emphasize that they cannot think about it all the time. Arnold states that he is afraid when he thinks about climate change, but he cannot worry all the time. Again, Diana's example is perhaps the most vivid. To her, climate change has become a "background noise" (Diana). It is ever-present, but you cannot tune into it all the time. Environmental scholars have drawn comparisons between worrying about the state of the environment to psychological distancing: Norgaard (2006) refers to "compassion fatigue" and Pidgeon (2012) to "issue fatigue".

This sentiment is captured well in a passage from *Solar* (McEwan, 2010):

She approved of his mission and loyally read climate-change stories in the press. But she told him once that to take the matter seriously would be to think about it all the time. Everything else shrank before it. And so, like everyone she knew, she could not take it seriously, not entirely. Daily life would not permit it. (p. 165)

For the informants, lack of material conditions and capacities relieve individuals from letting climate change permeate daily life.

Discussions on individual responsibility often occur separately from material differences between their home countries and Norway. The result is that references to global responsibilities and capacities moderate their preceding individualistic focus. Thus, the informants assign responsibility to everyone, but asymmetrically. Responsibility belongs to the beneficiaries of material injustices, which relates to the ecological footprint and unjust distribution of land. This is the core tenet of ecological citizenship (Dobson, 2003), and a key connection between the informants' sustainable development views and the theory. In the context of asymmetry, the informants single out China, India, and the US as especially polluting and capable countries – but also Europe and Norway. To them, responsibility similarly belongs to those capable of exerting meaningful change (what this thesis collectively refers to 'the capable').

4.3.2. Examples of responsibility based on capacities

- I think Norway are playing in a different league than Ghana ... Norway is rich, and they can do more ... you also have to understand that these people at the same time are contributing to global warming differently. – John
- [The] global North are the most powerful countries in the world. It will be Europe, America — especially the USA, to some extent China, because China has a lot of power in Africa. ... they have the financial power to extract the minerals to produce the green energy products, they have the best engineers, they are very good innovators. It makes them powerful because they have all these resources, that is. – Brian
- Yeah, there's a different responsibility among different states, based on resource availability [...] – Christopher

Environmental scholars have noted on the relationship between the material wealth in Norway

and unsustainable sources of energy as its driver. For example, Lein (2020, p. 171) asks whether the realization that much of Norway's riches are founded on oil exploration affects its climate change perceptions. Oxfeldt (2016, p. 10) and Norgaard (2006) connects these problematic relationships with guilt caused by global injustices. While Brian has made similar points with references to resource exploitation from Africa (Ghana in particular) to sustain sustainable development, the participants do not render Norwegians as 'culprits'. They do not give answers which would make Norwegians feel guilty. Instead, they point out capacities, and that these are a source of responsibility.

4.4. Rights in environmental questions

4.4.1. Examples of rights

- Environmental problems is borne by everyone. It doesn't discriminate, so we should all have the same right to protect ourselves for sure. One deserves the rights, we have the right to do something about it. – John
- Say for example if the CEO of a large company had to live next to the company, and they have to, *have to*, live there. Say a factory for instance, and this is a factory which has lots of carbon emission, and now imagine you have a village of 20 who live there, and suddenly they will find ways to reduce their emissions because they are living there, and it is impacting them. – Diana

The participants discuss peaceful means for combatting climate change. They envision solutions, *inter alia*, through democratic processes and by changing consumption habits. For them, rights to a sound environment is paramount. While capacities are heterogeneous, rights are universal. Consequently, they discuss rights in a global perspective, pointing out intergenerational obligations (key for ecological citizenship) and the need for environmental legislation. John emphasizes that it is the government's responsibility to provide a safe environment for its citizens. They have respect for laws protecting the environment, as mentioned in conjuncture with forestry above.

All participants can demonstrate 'environmental injustices', as exemplified in Diana's metaphor, but also by Brian who laments the lack of organized recycling in Ghana. Furthermore, Diana believes that the goals of states and individuals not necessarily are the same. These two examples are in line with ecological citizenship's focus on non-reciprocity, and reverberates Dobson's (2003) view that individuals might come in to conflict with political and economic structures. In Diana's case, individuals come into conflict with environmental rights due to

unsustainable behaviour. In Brian's case, the relationship is inverted. Individuals can come into conflict with unsustainable societal structures, such as the lack of organized recycling. As Dobson concludes on this point, "ecological citizenship will demand collective as well as individual action." (Ibid., p. 103).

Arnold is vague on rights, resorting to a slogan: "We are the people. We have the rights, we have the power to change. We have rights, people have to understand it." (Arnold). The difficulty in discussing environmental rights might stem from its abstract nature. However, the informants connect rights with citizenship. They discuss democratic channels as spaces for citizenry activities, such as regional assemblies (Brian), local government and grassroots movements (Diana), and environmental organizations (Christopher, John).

4.5. Perceptions of self-efficacy

It is useful to separate attitudes towards citizenship from actual experiences of it to understand their views. After all, approaches to ecological citizenship extends citizenry activities to the private sphere. The citations below relate to the informants' own examples.

4.5.1. Examples of ecological citizenship activities

- I once voted in a district assembly ... they call it an interest group meeting, where you bring all the people within the community to come together at the district assembly, and they put forward the things they want to hear back on the next year, so people also contribute, and ask for things they want to hear back on in the next year. Some people raise concerns about what we are talking about, making provisions for refuse, dumps, and proper management of cemeteries and other things ... It's more like exercising your rights in a way, so everybody has a right to contribute. – Brian
- I'm really hoping to find a job in any environmental cause after school. That will be my priority. I will consider that first, and any other job second. I only see that I want to work for environmental organizations, any organization that really work for the environment. – John
- I do also in that acknowledge that yes, there is a role the individual must take towards this, and personally I take the standard being a knowledgeable consumer, and in that sense making decisions that are more sustainable – Diana

Brian has been involved in regional community forums in Ghana (as enlarged on later). John was a member of an environmental organization and hopes to make a career out of this in the

future. Diana is the informant who most clearly connects the private sphere to citizenry activity and articulates it as a deliberate arena. For the rest, these platforms provide convenient opportunities for participation and for positive impact. All informants discuss experiences from organizations in general, but quickly relate their experiences to the environment. By connecting these and providing examples, the informants show that they understand the concept of citizenry activities. This increases the validity of the study. It signals that citizenship and rights are not only abstract notions.

The informants discuss material injustices but, curiously, do not seem to place themselves within these. Geographically, this is true – they do not live in their country of origin. Yet all except Arnold express a wish to go back. The thesis did not anticipate a high assessment of self-efficacy prior to the study. Self-efficacy refers to the informants own perceived ability to exert change. It is thus slightly different from ‘agency’, which relates more to actual abilities than perceived abilities. The expectation was derived from youth movements such as ‘School strike for climate’ (Thingsted, 2019), where students lament their ability to exert change, and empirical data on assessments of youth self-efficacy in relevant literature (Capstick et al., 2015, Selboe and Sæther, 2018).

Serendipitous discoveries of high self-efficacy can relate to the informants’ ability to study abroad, which might say something about their material position. From this perspective, their education sets them apart from their fellow citizens. This point is revisited in the discussion, section 625.1.2 with reference to capacity. The discussion argues that they feel obliged to be environmentally friendly based on self-efficacy, capacity, but also from the wish to do good (to be virous). It is clear that environmentally friendly behaviour is seen as being a good citizen for the informants.

4.6. Main findings

Where do millennial African students in Norway assign responsibility to combat climate change?

The study finds that millennial African students in Norway assign responsibility to combat climate change based on ecological footprints, capacity, and a wish to do good. Responsibility is bestowed to those with the largest ecological footprints, the rich or global North in general (e.g. Europe), but China, India, the US, and even Norway specifically. These are also capable states, which the informants tie to larger unjust power structures that reinforce and generate responsibilities. Responsibility is tied to both the private and the public sphere, although they largely give examples of own environmental responsibility in the private sphere. Thus, they assign some responsibility to themselves.

Do millennial African students in Norway hold sustainable development views indicative of ecological citizenship?

The analysis shows that millennial African students in Norway hold sustainable development views indicative of ecological citizenship. The way in which the informants contextualize climate change and responsibility, and the way this affects their perceptions on climate change responsibility are consistent with ecological citizenship. The discussion elaborates on this conclusion with references to what a negative finding would entail.

5. Discussion

5.1. Where do millennial African students in Norway assign responsibility to combat climate change?

5.1.1. *Materialism and the ecological footprint*

This section introduces two central points which illustrate where the informants assign responsibility to combat change. It discusses how, first, material positions are crucial in their conceptualizations of responsibility, which, second, shapes their views of asymmetry and non-reciprocal relationships (i.e. some should be more responsible than others). What follows is the assessment that they assign responsibility to those with large ecological footprints. However, and as section 5.1.2 returns to, materialism is a necessary but not sufficient explanation for these non-reciprocal relationships and for the informants' views on responsibility.

The first point relates to the informants' initial conceptualizations of climate change. Arnold, Brian, and Diana, for example, argue that people have to be in a certain position to be concerned about climate change. It resonates well with the material underpinnings of ecological citizenship, which shares a theoretical heritage with Marxism. People, notes Marx, "must be in a position to live in order to be able to 'make history'" (Marx and Engels, 1970, p. 48). Ecological citizenship hinges on a comparable material understanding of the world. Globalization has produced material conditions which creates communities (Dobson, 2003), and between these there exist transnational citizenship obligations (Hayward, 2006, p. 437). Furthermore, the ecological footprint, which depends on material conditions, is the source of obligations. The debtors are, in other words, better positioned to influence sustainable development.

It is a precondition to understand that ecological footprints differ, and in turn that these footprints have varying, deteriorating impacts on the environment. On this point, the informants are unambiguous. The informants discuss material limitations in the global South which do not exist in the global North. When they discuss excessive ecological footprints in the North, they underscore their points by referring to their native countries as contrasts. Diana, for example, emphasizes that Uganda is already climate sensitive. In this way, they highlight asymmetry, as well as showing what they see as desirable, namely sustainability.

Thus, there is a clear resonance between their focus on asymmetry with the ecological footprint

and unjust distribution of land (Dobson, 2003). Shiva (1998, cited in Ibid.), an inspiration for ecological citizenship, conceives of this asymmetry with reference to the North vs. South:

Through its global reach, the North exists in the South, but the South exists only within itself, since it has no global reach. Thus the South can *only* exist locally, while only the North exists globally (p. 50, italics original.)

It is from this baseline the study can move to the second point, namely the ecological citizenship argument that these asymmetries should generate obligations which are non-reciprocal. The informants use material contrast to establish non-reciprocity. In practice, this means that global South countries are less responsible than the global North (on average). Arnold from Eritrea feels that rich countries and polluting businesses are most responsible and asks how people who worry about whether they can eat lunch are supposed to combat climate change. As do John, who also points out food concerns among Ghanaians and how they cannot be expected to think (or sometimes know) about climate change.

Christopher echoes their rhetorical questions. He wonders how indigenous people in Ghana are supposed to help when they lack resources. This is indicative of Christopher's focus on the sources of climate change, which relates to structural problems. For him, factors such as urbanizations and unemployment are key drivers of climate change, and the remedy is better distribution, which fosters less congestion and therefore less pollution. Christopher points out that this development is not only happening in Ghana, but that it is a global phenomenon.

From these observations, it is possible to make the ecological citizenship connection. Ecological citizenship's key virtue is justice. Sustainable development is not enough, there must be a more just distribution of ecological space. Acts of ecological citizenship "involve reducing one's footprint to align with a more just and sustainable allocation of ecological space" (Schild, 2016, p. 22). The informants are not in a position to reduce their own footprints. Thus, they are not obliged to be ecological citizens, but can still hold sustainable development views indicative of ecological citizenship.

The millennial African students in this study draw clear parallels between climate change and other structural problems. These sentiments are also expressed in their initial answers on the threat level of climate change, which was not listed as the biggest threat facing the world, but rather as a byproduct of other globalized, structural problems. They connect climate change to larger problems, such as poverty (esp. Brian), inequality (esp. Idris), and lack of education (all).

As a result, it is feasible to conclude that the end goal in the informants' views, is justice and not 'merely' sustainability.

5.1.2. Capacity

The analysis suggest that materialism is a necessary but not sufficient explanation for the informants' creation of non-reciprocal relationships. As a result, the informants conceive of responsibility slightly different from ecological citizenship theory, in which ecological footprints are the sole source of obligations. The separation between materialism and capacity as sources of responsibility is not airtight. Rather, they build on each other. Their partition intend to showcase that the informants assign responsibility ('where' in RQ1) based on material factors (ecological footprints) but also based on capacity.

The informants understand 'capacity' as the ability for different actors to positively impact the environment and to undertake sustainable activities. Notions of capacities are essential for them. Although they could differentiate between the least and the most vulnerable countries to climate change (their own native country included in the latter), they spent little time on 'blaming' the worst offenders for polluting. When Greta Thunberg addressed the UN Climate Action summit, she scorned world leaders, stating: "You have stolen my dreams and my childhood with your empty words" (NPR.org, 2019). Christopher from Ghana says he is an admirer of the Swedish activist, but he does not emulate her tone. Instead, there is equanimity – a finding which is consistent with the other informants.

Thus, they spent less time on the asymmetry in *creating* climate change, and more on the asymmetrical responsibility to *address* it. To underline, they are clear that capacities vary among people, and recognize that material factors (ecological footprints) generate responsibilities. As described in the literature review, ecological footprint generates responsibilities which, in turn, produce obligations to achieve justice. For the informants, *ability* to exert change generates responsibilities as well, which, in turn, produce obligations to reach justice.

Figure 8. Model of Ecological Citizenship Theory and Empirical Data



Figure 9: The first (top) relationship is based on ecological citizenship theory, whilst the second (bottom) is based on empirical data. Both relationships influence the informants.

The informants usually discuss these capacities in light of resource use and pollution which created such material advantages to begin with. A frequent example, made by everyone, is the Norwegian oil industry and the concurrent promotion of sustainable development. They do not argue that this is univocally hypocritical²². Researchers have noted how people tend to link Norway's wealth towards capacity to help combat climate change (Norgaard, 2006, p. 354, Selboe and Sæther, 2018, p. 189). The Norwegian informants in Selboe and Sæther (2018, p. 189) connect capacity and wealth with justice and responsibility, and perceive Norway to be responsible to give aid and transfer green technology to poorer states.

This study can thus present corresponding findings of the relationship between wealth and justice – even though they do not originate from citizens of wealthy states, and that technology is less pronounced. In addition, capacities to combat climate change as an *independent* rationale for responsibility is both clearer and more frequent in this thesis. As returned to, this has some implications for ecological citizenship theory (section 6), and raise some questions to how different actors perceive seemingly straightforward relationship (Figure 8). The thesis directs its attention at forces which may shape these views²³

²² Diana could not find a word to describe this relationship but rejected the term 'hypocritical'.

²³ This relates to RQ1s focus on how responsibility is assigned, i.e. factors which shape their views.

5.2. Forks, not pitchforks: Neoliberalism and environmental responsibility

This thesis has (one) introduced neoliberalism as it relates to the environment, and (two) the private sphere as a space for action in ecological citizenship and for the informants. The recognition of the initial point requires ecological citizenship to carefully balance the private sphere as an arena to avoid shifting the burden entirely on the individual. The problem with the privatization of the environment is twofold, and it influences what the informants discuss with reference to responsibility and capacity.

First, it can obscure power-structures and relations of responsibility, in which those with higher ecological footprints should be asymmetrically more obligated to act (Dobson, 2003). Second, this impacts capacities to undertake meaningful change. To use Diana's words, the force of the collective is "orders of magnitudes larger than what the individual can do". Thus, it relates to both efficacy and impact. By exposing privatizing forces²⁴, people are in a more advantageous position to address structural causes through collective mobilization. If people know there is a tendency for responsibility to be shifted to them, it might make them more inclined to address structures in the public sphere, and not only undertake environmental activities in the private sphere.

Neoliberalism has highly influenced globalization's ideological side (Dicken, 2015). Its far reaching influence has seeped into modern environmental thinking, as identified by several scholars (Midtgaard, 2012, Oosthoek and Gills, 2008, Pidgeon, 2012, Schild, 2016, Schindel Dimick, 2015, Selboe and Sæther, 2018). There are different ways to name this trend. Maniates (2001) and Schild (2016) warns of 'individualizing' environmental responsibility. 'Privatization' refers to the wave of neoliberal policies to privatize government functions or services, in other words to transfer the responsibility of delivering a service from the public onto the private.

In the same vein, the privatization of the environment invokes a negative connotation to refer to the transfer of environmental responsibility from the state/government onto individuals. Consequently, the thesis' use of 'privatization' seeks a double entendre²⁵. The concept of 'privatizing the environment' in this specific context is inspired by Schindel Dimick (2015).

²⁴ Here understood as the different processes which places responsibility on individuals rather than collectives and which are part of the neoliberal narrative.

²⁵ This results in a paradoxical co-existence of 'the globalization of the environment' and 'the privatization of the environment'. Yet, these show the complex nature of globalization and the influence of neoliberalism.

However, criticisms exist outside academia as well, for example with a call for individuals to exercise their rights as both citizens and consumers (Ortiz, 2018), or, more strongly, by calling out the neoliberal persuasion for people to address climate change through pocket-books and not power and politics (Lukacs, 2017).

Privatization of environmental responsibility often render environmental acts more tangible and part of daily life (Schindel Dimick, 2015, Selboe and Sæther, 2018, p. 186). The examples of activities the informants connect to the environment are largely on the individual level. It would be imprudent to regard these habits as only a result of the privatization of the environment, but it is a factor worth pursuing. The informants relate recycling, avoiding car use, and certain types of food to environmental activities. These belong to the private sphere, which ecological citizenship mobilizes as an arena for environmental acts.

Yet, such activities are representative of what ecological citizenship is criticised for (e.g. in Schindel Dimick, 2015) – assigning too much responsibility on the individual. This is due to its focus on the sum of individual actions, and what is seen as ‘downplaying’ the roles of institutional structures in causing environmental problems, and its responsibility to provide solutions (Maniates, 2001, Melo-Escrihuela, 2008, Schild, 2016). Maniates (2001)²⁶ asserts that:

When responsibility for environmental problems is individualized, there is little room to ponder institutions, the nature and exercise of political power, or ways of collectively changing the distribution of power and influence in society — to, in other words, ‘think institutionally’ (p. 33).

It is worth addressing this concern with reference to the empirical data. The informants are aware of the asymmetrical role and influence of individuals compared to larger institutions and states, but they do not embed their environmental activities within these. That is, they are aware of such relationships, but do not explicitly connect them to their own behaviour. There is considerable belief that their individual actions can impact the environment positively, which is consistent with what Selboe and Sæther (2018) report from their young Norwegian informants.

While ecological citizenship scholars stress individual responsibilities (Dobson, 2003), and

²⁶ This quote also appears in Schild, 2016, p. 22.

even obligations to reduce one's ecological footprint, there are concerns of the individual's ability exert influence. For example, most of the worst polluting industries are producer driven rather than consumer driven (Dicken, 2015, p. 397). Here, consumer responses (private sphere) are ineffective. Considerations such as these influence the call for collective responsibility. (Dobson, 2006a, esp. pp. 225-226, Hayward, 2006, esp. p. 444). Despite this, Schindel Dimick (2015) claims that citizenship-environment scholars "echoes neoliberal logic in suggesting that responsibility for sustainability 'lies with the citizen'" (p. 394). By allowing citizenry activities to extend into the private sphere, ecological citizenship opens itself up to criticism. Schindel Dimick's (2015) critique is not directed at ecological citizenship specifically, but to citizenship concepts which include the private sphere in general.

Individual actions should not be dismissed completely. Scholars who argue that environmental responsibility should primarily lie with the collective understandably see that sustainable endeavours by private citizens are necessary (Schindel Dimick, 2015, pp. 394-395). The point is that to achieve sustainability, there needs to be genuine dialogue with electors and civil society which do not patronize or minimize stakes (Pidgeon, 2012, p. 100). One should not condescend those who try to do something for the environment because their actions have minimal effects. For instance, Arnold says he is environmentally conscious, but largely connects his behaviour to activities with little environmental impact (Wynes and Nicholas, 2017). On the whole, his ecological footprint is small, but as is the efficacy of his actions.

The informants undertake environmental activities in transportation choices, for example by cycling instead of driving or purchasing environmentally friendly food²⁷. Such activities are not inexorably tied to Schindel Dimick's (2015) criticism of privatization. In isolation, these are examples of citizenry activities with apparent connections to ecological citizenship. However, the criticism is more relevant when their activities are perceived in a light of little political activities.

This thesis discusses how ecological citizenship has neglected to engage with *real* people. It would benefit by using people's experiences and perceptions as a benchmark for further development. From the interviews, it is clear that there is considerable room for engaging with citizenship-based conversations. Their answers are often apolitical in this sense: while they

²⁷ None of the informants identified as vegetarian or vegan.

recognize that people can engage with politics, they do not reflect on their own role within these structures. For example, John has a political party in Ghana, but says he is “not really into politics”. Likewise, Arnold and Diana explain that governments should be more responsible than individuals, but do not reflect on their role in affecting politics. This finding is consistent with the discoveries of Selboe and Sæther (2018, p. 192) from Norwegian youth, where the authors characterize the participants as apolitical. Furthermore, the great belief in individual efforts among the millennial African informants does to a little extent ponder how this influence institutions, as warned by Maniates (2001).

It should be noted, however, that the informants’ transnational ties has limited their ability to influence politics in the most orthodox way, specifically through voting. Arnold, who intends to stay in Norway, is not a Norwegian citizen, and thus cannot vote at present based on his citizenship status. Diana has not been in her home country (Uganda) since reaching voting age. While the thesis finds some data to entertain the argument of privatization of environmental responsibilities, it does not attempt to generalize from the informants to the collective. Rather, it fits into the same paradigm which emphasize private sphere activities which are increasingly common (Capstick et al., 2015, Maniates, 2001, Schindel Dimick, 2015, Selboe and Sæther, 2018).

This paradigm should in itself be a warning sign of the privatization of environmental responsibility. To illustrate by way of a comparison: In 1920, peasant Soviet rebels armed with pitchforks protested the government’s confiscation of their food. The Pitchfork Uprising is a stark contrast to the peaceful ‘School strikes for climate’. Environmental protests such as School strike for climate are non-violent.²⁸ Theories of ecological citizenship (and citizenship-environment theories in general) are entirely non-violent. Ecological citizenship does not discuss the overthrow of existing power structures by popular revolt. They want change, but not through revolution. In other words, citizens can promote sustainable development through *forks, not pitchforks*. Citizen activities might be eating more sustainable food, such as avoiding meat, and boycotting food from unsustainable sources. It is not conceived of, however, in terms of revolution.

²⁸ Some scholars have pointed out that liberal democracy is weak in environmental questions, as it is incapable of politically coercing citizens to abandon environmentally harmful lifestyles (Barry, 2001, in Jagers, 2009, p. 19). For more on non-democratic forms, see ‘environmental authoritarianism’ (Beeson, 2010).

Dobson (2006a) further highlights “arguments and activities that might influence institutions, corporations, movements, parties, bureaucracies, schools, departments, to move in a sustainable direction” (p. 226). When the head of OPEC criticise striking students, led by Greta Thunberg, for creating a mass mobilization against oil (Watts, 2019), it shows that collective citizenry activities has *some* potential for influence. These young students do not have any environmental responsibilities based on ecological footprints but still feel responsible, just as the informants in this thesis do.

5.3. Self-ascription of environmental responsibility

There are different ways to interpret the results on self-ascription of environmental responsibilities. This section discusses additional factors which may affect the informants’ conceptions to balance arguments related to privatization and neoliberalism. Despite their low ecological footprints, they perceive it as a duty to work towards sustainability. To reiterate, the obligations of a Norwegian citizen are, *on average*, higher than that of a Ghanaian citizen (Global-Footprint-Network, 2020) based on an ecological citizenship perspective.

5.3.1. Self-efficacy

Schild (2016, p. 29) argues that self-efficacy is a source of responsibility, not only guilt. Self-efficacy relates to assessment of one’s own ability to positively impact the environment. These assessments have some practical implications. Low self-efficacy and high belief in scientists and technological solutions is shown to make informed citizens feel less responsible and less concerned about environmental problems in some instances (Kellstedt et al., 2008, p. 113). In the same vein, Eden (1993) ties self-efficacy to responsibility – a low self-efficacy may entail that people feel little responsibility. The obverse is true for the informants.

The informants in this thesis have high evaluations of self-efficacy, most specifically through their roles as educators. Hence, the practical implication is a higher assessment of responsibility for themselves. All could name daily life activities related to the environment, with the intention of positive effects. These quotidian tasks are taken for granted, indicative of a normalization of pro-environmental lifestyles, consistently identified by Capstick et al. (2015) as an emerging phenomenon in the past 15 years.

The informants are aware of how different actors produce different ecological footprints, which in turn affects the environment. From this basic logic, they can place responsibility on those

with larger footprints, often characterizes by them as ‘the rich’ or ‘the global north’. At the same time, they ascribe responsibility to themselves, even if their ecological footprints are seen as “already climate sensitive” (Diana). Eden (1993) writes that: “... responsibility is often felt and depends upon a belief in efficacy, that individuals can have some impact through pro-environmental behaviour, as well as agency and choice over what behaviour they may undertake.” (p. 1748).

This explanation can partly account for their self-ascription of responsibility, as all participants are positive about their own ability to exert meaningful change, and that they can do something helpful for the environment. To take their own material point of departure, they recognize themselves as (relatively) privileged citizens, who have had the chance to gain a higher education. All informants, except Arnold, expect to return to their birth country. As such, they reflect on their own unique position on society. With an international study background comes an understanding of the severity of climate change. This, in turn, generates responsibilities, an argument which supports Eden’s (Ibid., p. 1749) claim that material positions highlights the agency component of responsibility.

When asked to identify the means they might undertake to help the environment, the informants largely gave answers nested within a civic sphere – thus there is an apparent contradiction between what they list as daily environmental activities, and what they see as truly salient measures. For example, they emphasized conversations to change attitudes, education, and even participation in organizations. Aside from Diana, who takes a stand as a knowledgeable consumer, all participants largely discuss along these lines.

When the informants discuss shortcomings of their own actions, they contrast it with the influence of big countries or corporations, which is congruent with contrast made by participants in Capstick et al. (2015, p. 16) and Selboe and Sæther (2018, p. 190). Discussions on shortcomings do not, however, result in a low assessment of self-efficacy. It seems reasonable that the informants are aware of their potential for action, which is more probable to emerge within communities, and not the international scale. Furthermore, it seems that the informants are still waiting for their chance to exert their influence, perhaps after completing their studies.

5.3.2. *Virtue and the role of educators*

«Du må ikke tåle så inderlig vel
den urett som ikke rammer dig selv!» (Øverland, 1937, p. 68)²⁹

Earlier, the thesis argued that capacity generates responsibility for the informants. Another angle is *virtue*³⁰ as a source of responsibility – especially for the responsibility they assign to themselves³¹. This does not exist in a vacuum from external forces which Maniates (2001) and Schindel Dimick (2015) describe as ‘privatizing’ (Figure 9). Climate change literature connect virtue (to be good) with responsibility (Dobson, 2003, Hayward et al., 2015, p. 23). Discussions of virtue as a source of responsibility returns to the fundamental assumptions of ecological citizenship, in which the wish to be good is a strong moral imperative to be sustainable (and to reduce one’s ecological impact). Consequently, this discussion shows that the informants have sustainability views indicative of the key moral underpinnings in ecological citizenship.

Figure 9. Self-ascription of Responsibility



Figure 9: Virtue and external pressure results in self-ascription of responsibility for the informants.

In the informants’ view, to be good is to be responsible. They have a broad conception of responsibility – they want to be responsible to both their community but also towards ‘the world’, as climate change requires global efforts. Thus, the informants assign responsibility to smaller communities but, crucially, also ‘distant strangers’ (Dobson, 2003, p. 8)

The aforementioned struggle between actors and structures, and individual actions in light of global climate issues create barriers for climate change action. Capstick et al. (2015, p. 14)

²⁹ English meaning: Do not accept injustices because they fall on someone other than you.

³⁰ Whether virtues are a product of external pressure is a philosophical and behavioural question beyond the scope of this analysis. This thesis discusses virtue as a motivation separate from self-efficacy and forces which can ‘individualize’ environmental responsibility.

³¹ Self-ascription of responsibility.

argues that lack of action results in pejorative self-appraisal among environmentally conscious individuals. These people might imagine an environmental standard which they are unable to live up to. Self-criticism, argues Capstick et al. (Ibid.), reveal their understanding of a moral dimension to individual actions. If the informants understand pro-environmental actions as virtuous, they measure the extent of their inaction against their moral standard. This self-criticism would not arise if they did not consider their inaction to produce unwanted environmental externalities, and that these impact others. These factors connect climate change responsibility to virtue.

Focus on the unseen effects of climate change were consistent throughout the interviews. As noted, climate change disproportionately affects poorer countries, even though richer countries are the worst emitters (UNDESA, 2017, Wolf et al., 2009, p. 506). These relationships obscure emission consequences, and it may be difficult for individuals in richer countries to understand their negative environmental consequences when these are felt elsewhere. As Paine (1776) wrote, the sorrow is not sufficiently brought to “*their* doors to make *them* feel the precariousness” (p. 32, italics original).

Both Brian and Christopher’s references to Covid-19 (section 4.2.1) are relevant in timing and image. Climate change has already impacted parts of the world (UNDESA, 2017), but is still ‘far away’ for most people, both temporally and spatially. In Norway, there is a belief among people that climate change will impact others, and not ourselves – a notion which is also found in American studies (e.g. Leiserowitz et al., 2017, in Lein, 2020, p. 167). The solution to this, for the informants, is education.

By connecting climate change inaction to morality, they see awareness as the way forward – just as ecological citizenship theory has knowledge of ecological footprints as its key moral imperative (e.g. Dobson, 2006b). Thus, Paine (1776), Øverland (1937), and the informants’ citations in section 4.2.1 strike the same chord. Oxfeldt (2016, p. 9) writing on Scandinavian stories of privileges, notes that globalization is bringing the non-privileged ‘others’ closer to us. A crisis abroad is instant news at home. The world is, as Mackinder predicted (section 2.1), connected. The result – global awareness.

Dobson’s conception of ecological citizenship sees the ideal route to sustainable development through people who “see themselves as part of a larger ecological community and are

motivated toward pro-environmental behaviours out of virtue rather than their own self-interest” (Schild, 2016, p. 21). The informants see themselves as part of a collective, and not as atomistic actors. Their high perceptions of self-efficacy seems to be nurtured by a feeling that they can mobilize their communities, who, through education, can become agents for change.

It is on this point they converge more than on any other – that education is the most critical step towards sustainable development. It is this thesis’ view that the material differences between their country of origin and their newfound perspectives as transnational citizens in Norway has fuelled this notion. Yet, scholars increasingly question the narrative that education is the key to a sustainable society (Norgaard, 2006, Wynes and Nicholas, 2017). Anton Chekhov wrote that: “Man will become better when you show him what he is like” (as cited in Pinker, 2003, p. xi), but there is little evidence that ‘man will become more environmentally friendly when you show him what he is like’ – environmental scholars criticise knowledge deficit models (Wynes and Nicholas, 2017, p. 6). Dobson (2007, p. 276) too recognizes the limits of education in creating ecological citizens.

When the informants tie responsibility with education, they attempt to take on a citizenry role as educators. They are motivated by a perception of self-efficacy in that their education may have positive long-term consequences for the environment. Additionally, they are virtue driven in their endeavours to spread pro-environmental attitudes to their friends, families, and larger communities. It becomes a response to Rousseau (1755) – create *ecological* citizens and you have everything you need *to combat climate change*.

5.4. Do millennial African students in Norway hold sustainable development views indicative of ecological citizenship?

This thesis could invite an initial category criticism of whether Millennial African students can be ecological citizens to begin with. To this, there are two main answers. First, the thesis does not attempt to pin a label on its informants. The thesis investigates whether millennial African students in Norway hold sustainable development views *indicative* of ecological citizenship, not if they *are* ecological citizens. Dobson’s conception of ecological citizenship distinguishes between those who have an excess of ecological space, and those who have an inadequate amount of ecological space (Hayward, 2006, p. 439). These generate obligations for those in excess towards those in debt. Hence, ecological citizenship is not a privilege (Dobson, 2006b,

p. 449). Second, it should be noted that ecological citizenship is still in its infancy, and thus more theory is needed to operationalize it (Hayward, 2006, p. 439, Jagers, 2009, Melo-Escribuela, 2008, p. 114).

The following paragraphs aim to clarify why the informants can be characterized as having ecological citizenship views. This assessment is discussed with references to other conceptions of citizenship, as well as environmental citizenship. By discussing the informants' position compared to these, it is possible to see that they hold views which are different from the others, and more consistent with ecological citizenship. Hence, the discussion entertains what a negative finding would mean.

First, and the most basic criterion, would be if the informants did not believe anthropogenic climate change occurred, or if it did not need reactions tied to responsibility. Hypothetically, if the informants believed divine intervention or technological fixes were sufficient, they would not hold views indicative of ecological citizenship. As Michael Beard describes to a climate change doubter in *Solar*: "It's a catastrophe. Relax!" (McEwan, 2010, p. 217) – the informants see climate change as a serious problem which must be combated, and thus there is no problem in this regard.

The early distinction between environmental citizenship and ecological citizenship is particularly helpful in determining the results. For example, if they held views more associated with the environmental counterpart, which is presented as an extension of liberal citizenship in this thesis. The affirmative conclusion to RQ2 is underpinned by the literature review's operationalization of liberalism, civic republicanism, cosmopolitanism, and environmental citizenship. To illustrate, table 7 highlights which model of citizenship the informants relate the most to by using a bold font.

Table 7. Empirical Data Indicative of Ecological Citizenship

	Environmental Citizenship	Ecological Citizenship
Type of citizenship	Extension of liberal citizenship	New form of citizenship ('post-cosmopolitan')
Level of analysis	State centric	Not state centric (non-territorial)
Sphere of environmental acts	Public sphere	Private and public sphere (ecological footprint)
Most emphasis on rights or responsibilities	Rights	Responsibilities
End goal	Sustainability	Justice

Figure 7: The informants' sustainable development views are highlighted with a bold font. The figure stylistically portrays their views as most consistent with ecological citizenship.

Christopher distinguishes himself from the rest with his frequent references to globalization specifically, yet they share global perceptions of climate change and they are aware of global power structures which create asymmetrical responsibilities. These points lend credence to an acceptance of RQ2 as ecological citizenship is non-territorial and built on globalization.

The informants address both the public sphere and the private sphere. The former is most salient, it is here they see real change as most probable to emerge from, whether through 'authorities' (Christopher) or 'government' (Arnold). Diana wants to assign responsibility to the highest possible scale, as it is "orders of magnitudes larger than what the individual can do" (Diana). In the private sphere, they discuss environmental actions such as recycling, using public transportation, and preparing food in an environmentally friendly way. While they see the public sphere as the most salient sphere of environmental action, they are unclear about its practical implications for the state.

The weakest finding relates to the post-cosmopolitan quality of ecological citizenship. *To be clear*, they are sufficiently global in their considerations and focused on asymmetry and non-reciprocity to share more with ecological citizenship than any of the other theories (esp. cosmopolitanism). However, the modesty in which the informants discuss responsibility and blame for creating climate change is perhaps their most radical quality.

Ecological citizenship, which originated among western scholars, does not attempt to chastise itself. Yet it is clear on who, on average, are ecological debtors and who are in debt. The informants hold weaker non-reciprocal views. They seem reluctant to reduce their personal responsibility as well as dismissive of the idea of being angry with the polluters. As the method section evaluated, there might be problems of validity. Social desirability is a critical factor in self-ascription of responsibility, whilst religious views and deeper personal characteristics shape views on 'blame'. These views are not captured in this study. However, the analysis is confident asserting that validity cannot conclusively explain these findings.

A final, challenging note relates to Brian's position compared to the other informants. Brian sees the regional forums in Ghana as an ideal space for citizenry activities. This view seems to indicate a position close to civic republicanism, in that these citizens have a responsibility to exercise their democratic rights and hold their community accountable. Seen in light of Table 1, his views relate most with civic republicanism. Furthermore, when asked about environmental rights, he discusses it in a citizenship perspective rather than from a consumer perspective. However, and representative of what distinguishes ecological citizenship from civic republicanism, Brian does not feel responsible because his ecological footprint is insignificant, and on the whole sustainable. This does, to him, generate a non-reciprocal relationship.

6. Towards a stronger theory of ecological citizenship

Melo-Escrihuela (2008) asserts that environment-citizenship concepts are vague in their practical application. Likewise, it is unclear what constitutes an act of ecological citizenship – the literature review described this as a ‘wide container’. Schindel Dimick (2015) criticises environment-citizenship theories for allowing for a privatization of environmental responsibilities. Scholars should strive to address this critique, not only repeat it, in an effort to strengthen its theory and improve its practical application.

While a small number of participants does not allow for broader generalizations, this study’s empirical data may provide some answers, or at least raise some pertinent questions. The informants hold some views which lends credence to an argument of privatization of the environment (e.g. do not consider themselves as part of political solutions), which in turn underscores the need for ecological citizenship to address Schindel Dimick’s (2015) criticism. The next sections utilize the empirical data in an attempt to build a stronger theory of ecological citizenship. The thesis proposes that ecological citizenship theory should adopt some mechanisms to clarify the private sphere as a space for citizenship activities. Two concepts are envisioned as useful in these endeavours, and both address the concerns raised above by drawing from the empirical data. The first is a concept of efficacy and the second a concept of ecological intent.

All informants exhibit a tension between the recognition of the limitations of individual actions and self-ascription of responsibility. Furthermore, they do not discuss their own role in the political sphere (except Brian). As a result, they hold ecological citizenship attitudes in general, but their citizenry activities largely take place in the private sphere. Diana’s position pertains to this analysis. She is not sure whether she regards herself as responsible and fears too much emphasis falls on the individual. To her, it should be lifted to a larger, more impactful (or efficient) scale. Despite this, she recognizes that the individual has a role to play, and for her it means being a *knowledgeable* consumer with a particular focus on food.

Being environmentally conscious should involve understanding the vast global production networks which sustain everyday life, and that all of these processes are tied to particular places with particular emissions, as emphasized by Dicken (2015). This knowledge should inform people of the global impacts of their actions, and thus the global obligations this entails.

Ecological citizenship focus on ecological footprints, and that these are asymmetrical, and create non-reciprocal responsibilities on a global scale.

While this logic is consistent with Dobson (2003), it says nothing about efficacy. Efficacy is different from perceptions of self-efficacy. It relates to the impact of certain environmental actions (Wynes and Nicholas, 2017), while self-efficacy is subjective, and relates to the entire role an individual perceives himself/herself to have towards the environment, not simply actions. Diana calls out some inconsistency in Norwegian behaviour. She observed people who used their role as consumers to boycott meat eating, but at the same time they bought 50 million different thingamajigs³² (Diana). It is better to do something than nothing, yet the thesis has established that the privatization of the environment is harmful for long-term sustainable development (Maniates, 2001, Schindel Dimick, 2015).

Diana's own position is that of a knowledgeable consumer. She is aware of the efficacy of actions (in line with Wynes and Nicholas, 2017), which informs her that the ecologically positive action of not eating meat may be cancelled out by an otherwise frivolous lifestyle. A knowledgeable consumer can weight different options, and assess choices based on impact. Hence, the thesis proposes that ecological citizenship needs increased focus on efficacy in the private sphere, which in turn entails that an act of citizenship needs deliberation on efficacy.

This conceptual mechanism addresses some problems in private sphere citizenship, but not public sphere citizenship. A second suggestion is thus increased focus on ecological intention, which first reshapes the private sphere as an intentional arena for citizenship but with explicit deliberation on efficacy – as well as the public sphere. Eden (1993) writes that responsibility, in any form, embodies agency “in that both some choice over how to act and some awareness of the outcome are perceived” (p. 1745). This is a corollary to the point above in that it relates to efficacy. In addition, it refers to intentionality. Deliberation of efficacy accounts for Diana's choice to *not* buy ‘50 million different thingamajigs’, but it is an act of ecological citizenship if it is ecologically intentional.

To further illustrate: Diana discusses the recent popularity of paper straws (as opposed to plastic), lamenting that using paper straws does more to satisfy our own wish to do something positive towards the environment than actually contributing. Writing on the individualization

³² Something which is difficult to name.

of environmental responsibility, Maniates (2001) too points out the little effect of paper straws: “we agonize over the ‘paper or plastic’ choice at the checkout counter, knowing somehow that neither is right given larger institutions and social structures” (p. 33). Therefore, Diana is able to both recognize the effect of specific individual acts, and the structures individual acts exist within.

Moreover, Diana is an ideal type of a knowledgeable consumer who can utilize the private sphere for citizenry activities, an arena which requires knowledge about efficacy of specific acts, but also a worldview which keeps structures in mind. This thesis argues that these two characteristics can be an appropriate way for ecological citizenship to respond to the privatization of the environment. When individuals feel pressured by, for example, new government policies or corporate campaigns (e.g. paper straws) to undertake measures with little environmental/ecological efficacy in the private sphere, they should pause and reflect. The response should be to consider the ecological efficacy and ecological intention, which relates to civic roles.

There can be no model which properly safeguards individuals from becoming ‘victims’ to a privatization of environmental responsibility. Yet, some of these suggestions may facilitate a strengthening of ecological citizenship. The theory can be much clearer on issues relating to privatization and should offer more guidance. A citizen would do well to internalize a checklist, which consider 1) the efficacy of one’s environmental acts, and 2) whether one’s environmental actions are disproportionately more in the private sphere than in the public sphere. The remedy is not only to think of oneself as a political being, but to think of the opposite of individualization – collectivization. Ecological citizens should mobilize as collectives, and not individuals.

Following the lead of Maniates (2001) and Schild (2016) there ought to be increased focus on political agency. Citizens should ideally have the same opportunities as Brian and be able to voice their environmental concerns in community forums. Brian stress that everyone deserves environmental rights, as well as a duty to participate. Arguing that individual environmental acts have limited effects does not mean relieving people of their duties. It means installing new, asymmetrical, and non-reciprocal duties, both by being efficient and knowledgeable consumers in the private sphere such as Diana, but also by being engaged citizens in the public sphere such as Brian.

6.1. Conclusion

Through five in-depth qualitative interviews with millennial African students in Norway (Trondheim), the analysis has explored where the informants assign responsibility to combat climate change (RQ1), and whether their sustainable development views are indicative of ecological citizenship (RQ2). Furthermore, the empirical data, in concert with the argument of privatization of responsibility, form the basis for an attempt to strengthen ecological citizenship.

John points out that two people who have done two different crimes cannot serve the same sentence. Similarly, two individuals with different ecological footprints cannot bear the same responsibility to combat climate change. This sentiment resonates with ecological citizenship, the political theory primarily associated with Dobson. A thorough review and critique of citizenship literature identify several key components of ecological citizenship. These form the bedrock for answering the thesis' research questions. The informants' global conceptions of climate change responsibilities and solutions, their non-reciprocal views, and justice driven goals resonate soundly with ecological citizenship.

The informants contend that individuals with different ecological footprints are asymmetrically obliged to combat climate change. They assign responsibility based on materialism, capacity, and virtue. Rich global North countries in Europe, the US and China – but also Norway, are responsible to combat climate change based on material conditions which relate to the ecological footprint and capacities. Together, the informants and ecological citizenship tie responsibility to both the private and the public sphere. Thus, responsibility also belongs to themselves, based on capacity and virtue.

Yet, their own activities are mostly nested in the private sphere. They largely do not reflect on their own role in politics, which the thesis connects to the privatization of environmental responsibility. As a response, the thesis proposes that ecological citizenship should be clearer on efficacy of private sphere actions. Furthermore, 'ecological intent' aspires to instil a conceptual mechanism to keep privatization of responsibility in check. By reshaping the private sphere as an intentional arena for citizenry activities, it creates a master-servant relationship. Here, ecological citizens are the masters, and forces of privatization the servants.

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Attachment 1 – NSD



NSD sin vurdering

Prosjekttittel

Responsibility to Protect ... the Environment

Referansenummer

705225

Registrert

25.02.2020 av Erlend S. Granrud - erlendsg@stud.ntnu.no

Behandlingsansvarlig institusjon

Norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige universitet NTNU / Fakultet for samfunns- og utdanningsvitenskap (SU)
/ Institutt for geografi

Prosjektansvarlig (vitenskapelig ansatt/veileder eller stipendiat)

Jørund Aasetre, jorund.aasetre@ntnu.no, tlf: 73412569

Type prosjekt

Studentprosjekt, masterstudium

Kontaktinformasjon, student

Erlend Søberg Granrud, erlendsg@ntnu.stud.no, tlf: 99570867

Prosjektperiode

02.03.2020 - 15.06.2020

Status

29.04.2020 - Vurdert

20.03.2020 - Vurdert

Det er vår vurdering at behandlingen av personopplysninger i prosjektet vil være i samsvar med personvernlovgivningen så fremt den gjennomføres i tråd med det som er dokumentert i meldeskjemaet den 20.03.2020 med vedlegg, samt i meldingsdialogen mellom innmelder og NSD. Behandlingen kan starte.

MELD VESENTLIGE ENDRINGER

Dersom det skjer vesentlige endringer i behandlingen av personopplysninger, kan det være nødvendig å melde dette til NSD ved å oppdatere meldeskjemaet. Før du melder inn en endring, oppfordrer vi deg til å lese om hvilke type endringer det er nødvendig å melde:

https://nsd.no/personvernombud/meld_prosjekt/meld_endringer.html

Du må vente på svar fra NSD før endringen gjennomføres.

TYPE OPPLYSNINGER OG VARIGHET

Prosjektet vil behandle særlige kategorier av personopplysninger om etnisk opprinnelse, politisk oppfatning, religion og filosofisk overbevisning, samt alminnelige kategorier av personopplysninger frem til 15.06.2020.

LOVLIG GRUNNLAG

Prosjektet vil innhente samtykke fra de registrerte til behandlingen av personopplysninger. Vår vurdering er at prosjektet legger opp til et samtykke i samsvar med kravene i art. 4 nr. 11 og art. 7, ved at det er en frivillig, spesifikk, informert og utvetydig bekreftelse, som kan dokumenteres, og som den registrerte kan trekke tilbake.

Lovlig grunnlag for behandlingen vil dermed være den registrertes uttrykkelige samtykke, jf. personvernforordningen art. 6 nr. 1 bokstav a, jf. art. 9 nr. 2 bokstav a, jf. personopplysningsloven § 10, jf. § 9 (2).

PERSONVERNPRINSIPPER

NSD vurderer at den planlagte behandlingen av personopplysninger vil følge prinsippene i personvernforordningen om:

- lovlighet, rettferdighet og åpenhet (art. 5.1 a), ved at de registrerte får tilfredsstillende informasjon om og samtykker til behandlingen
- formålsbegrensning (art. 5.1 b), ved at personopplysninger samles inn for spesifikke, uttrykkelig angitte og berettigede formål, og ikke viderebehandles til nye uforenlige formål
- dataminimering (art. 5.1 c), ved at det kun behandles opplysninger som er adekvate, relevante og nødvendige for formålet med prosjektet
- lagringsbegrensning (art. 5.1 e), ved at personopplysningene ikke lagres lengre enn nødvendig for å oppfylle formålet

DE REGISTRERTES RETTIGHETER

Så lenge de registrerte kan identifiseres i datamaterialet vil de ha følgende rettigheter: åpenhet (art. 12), informasjon (art. 13), innsyn (art. 15), retting (art. 16), sletting (art. 17), begrensning (art. 18), underretning (art. 19), dataportabilitet (art. 20).

NSD vurderer at informasjonen som de registrerte vil motta oppfyller lovens krav til form og innhold, jf. art. 12.1 og art. 13.

Vi minner om at hvis en registrert tar kontakt om sine rettigheter, har behandlingsansvarlig institusjon plikt til å svare innen en måned.

FØLG DIN INSTITUSJONS RETNINGSLINJER

NSD legger til grunn at behandlingen oppfyller kravene i personvernforordningen om riktighet (art. 5.1 d), integritet og konfidensialitet (art. 5.1. f) og sikkerhet (art. 32).

Microsoft via OneDrive er databehandler i prosjektet. NSD legger til grunn at behandlingen oppfyller kravene til bruk av databehandler, jf. art 28 og 29.

For å forsikre dere om at kravene oppfylles, må dere følge interne retningslinjer og eventuelt rådføre dere med behandlingsansvarlig institusjon.

OPPFØLGING AV PROSJEKTET

NSD vil følge opp ved planlagt avslutning for å avklare om behandlingen av personopplysningene er avsluttet.

Lykke til med prosjektet!

Kontaktperson hos NSD: Jørgen Wincentzen
Tlf. Personverntjenester: 55 58 21 17 (tast 1)

Attachment 2 – Information letter

Are you interested in taking part in the research project “Citizenship and Sustainable Development?”

This is an inquiry about participation in a research project where the main purpose is to study attitudes on responsibility and agency in climate change matters. This letter informs about the purpose of the project and what your participation will involve.

Purpose of the project

The purpose of the study is to understand what *you* think about climate change, and who *you* think is responsible for its causes and solutions. Furthermore, the research is interested in your perception of *your own* role in these matters. Should individuals feel responsible, or should responsibility be shouldered by others?

Responsibility

The responsible institution for the project is institute for geography, NTNU.

Why are you asked to participate?

We would like to get in touch with non-western immigrants (preferably from Sub-Saharan Africa) to Norway, aged 18-29, studying at NTNU. This group will bring diversity into climate change studies and complement findings with Norwegians in the same age group.

What does participation involve for you?

If you chose to take part in the project, this will involve your participation in an audio-recorded interview. It will last approximately 1 hour. The interview includes questions about your own opinions on climate change, and your own background (for example organizational work). All audio-recordings will be deleted within the conclusion of this project on June 15. 2020.

Participation is voluntary!

Participation in the project is voluntary. If you chose to participate, you can withdraw your consent at any time without giving a reason. All information about you will then be made anonymous. There will be no negative consequences for you if you chose not to participate or later decide to withdraw.

Your personal privacy – how we will store and use your personal data

We will only use your personal data for the purpose(s) specified in this information letter. We will process your personal data confidentially and in accordance with data protection legislation (the General Data Protection Regulation and Personal Data Act). Only the researcher will have access to personal data during the research period. No unauthorized persons are able to access the personal data. We *will replace your name and contact details with a code*. Lists of names, contact details, and respective codes will be stored separately from the rest of the collected data. Your answers can not be traced back to you.

What will happen to your personal data at the end of the research project?

The project is scheduled to end on the 15th of June 2020. All audio-recordings and personal information will be deleted after this date.

Your rights

So long as you can be identified in the collected data, you have the right to:

- access the personal data that is being processed about you
- request that your personal data is deleted
- request that incorrect personal data about you is corrected/rectified
- receive a copy of your personal data (data portability), and
send a complaint to the Data Protection Officer or The Norwegian Data Protection Authority regarding the processing of your personal data

What gives us the right to process your personal data?

We will process your personal data based on your consent.

Based on an agreement with the department of geography at NTNU, NSD – The Norwegian Centre for Research Data AS has assessed that the processing of personal data in this project is in accordance with data protection legislation.

Where can I find out more?

If you have questions about the project, or want to exercise your rights, contact:

- Erlend S. Granrud, by email: erlendsg@stud.ntnu.no, or by telephone: +4799570867
- The department of geography, NTNU, via Jørund Aasetre (supervisor), by email: jorund.aasetre@ntnu.no, or by telephone: 73412569

- NSD – The Norwegian Centre for Research Data AS, by email: personverntjenester@nsd.no, or by telephone: +47 55 58 21 17.

Yours sincerely,

Jørund Aasetre

(Supervisor)

Erlend S. Granrud

(Student)

Consent form

I have received and understood information about the project *Citizenship and Sustainable Development* and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I give consent:

to participate in an interview

I give consent for my personal data to be processed until the end date of the project, approx. 15.05.2020

(Signed by participant, date)

Attachment 3 – Interview guide

Introduction

1. Name and age
2. Field of study
3. Where are you originally from?
4. How long have you been in Norway?
5. Do you want to return?
6. Family in home country?
7. Do you intend to return to your country of origin?

Main part/reflection

Theme	Main questions	Related questions
Theme 1, Q1	Can you tell me about the first time you heard about ‘climate change’?	How old were you? Told by whom? Do you remember how you felt about this at the time?
Theme 1, Q2	What thoughts or feelings arise when you think about climate change?	Is it a problem? Concern to you? Is it bigger than other problems? Why is it a problem? For whom/where is it a problem? Are you optimistic about the future – both for yourself and for the environment?
Theme 1, Q3	Do you experience a difference between climate change attitudes in [country of origin] and your current residence in Norway?	Can you elaborate?
Theme 1, Q4,	Where do you find information about climate change?	What do you think about the way climate change is portrayed in the media? Different in Norway than in [country of origin?]
Theme 2, Q1	Is there a responsibility to take climate change action?	A responsibility towards what? What does sustainable development

		mean to you? Who are they? Where are they/should be?
Theme 2, Q2	Do you feel any personal responsibility?	Do you think people have any responsibility to undertake such activities? Why do citizens/people have responsibilities? Any responsibility based on citizenship?
Theme 2, Q3	Based on your opinions on climate change, does this affect your actions? Do you perform any activities in your daily life you relate to the environment?	Examples? Recycling, consumption, travelling etc? Do you talk about this with your friends/family/loved ones?
Theme 2, Q4	How do you think people feel about doing such activities?	Do you feel this yourself? Satisfied with own effort? Is this different in Norway than in [country of origin]?
Theme 3, Q1	Which groups do you think are MOST vulnerable to climate change?	Where are they? Why are they vulnerable? Who has a responsibility for this group?
Theme 3, Q2	Which groups are LEAST vulnerable to climate change?	Where are they? Who are they? Why are they not as vulnerable?
Theme 3, Q3	You have pointed out more vulnerable and less vulnerable groups. Do you think they have the same responsibility towards climate change?	Why do you feel this way? What are these responsibilities? How does responsibility vary among different groups? Norway vs. [country of origin]
Theme 3,	How can those you see as most responsible best have an	Positive impact

Q4	impact on the environment?	Where would this happen? Through which institutions? Which means? What are their chances of succeeding with this?
Theme 4, Q1	I would like to introduce another subject. Should people have any rights in environmental questions	What are these rights? Why?
Theme 4, Q1	Do you think [country of origin] should have different rights in environmental questions than Norway?	Why/why not? Why does/does not this go both ways? Are these rights respected? What about responsibility?
Theme 4, Q2	With reference to your answers on most and least vulnerable groups, do you think they have the same rights in environmental questions?	Why do you feel this way?
Theme 5, Q1	Based on your view of your own responsibility, and your description of your own daily environmental activities: Do you believe that you, yourself, can have an impact on the environment?	In what way? What could you do to gain more influence?
Theme 5, Q2	What is your responsibility compared to bigger communities or groups?	Who/what are these groups? What kind of responsibilities? How is this responsibility different?
Theme 5, Q3	Are you a member of any organization, for example environmental organizations, groups, a political party, or any religious community?	If yes, anything related to the environment?

Ending

- What is missing from the conversation about climate change?
- Someone else you think I should speak with? Trondheim with an African background, aged about 18-29.
- I wish to thank you for participating in this project. All of the interviews will be transcribed, and then analysed as they relate to my topic and research questions. The audio-recordings will be deleted at the conclusion of the project. The deadline for the project is the 29 of May, and if you are interested, I can send you my finished project by email. Do not hesitate to contact me by phone or email if you have any questions.

